



THE TRIBUNE WAR TRACTS.

No. 4.

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

HISTORY OF ITS CAMPAIGNS, THE PENINSULA, MARYLAND, FREDERICKSBURG.

TESTIMONY OF ITS THREE COMMANDERS,

Maj.-Gen. G. B. McCLELLAN, Maj.-Gen. A. E. BURNSIDE,

AND

Maj.-Gen. JOSEPH HOOKER,

BEFORE THE

Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War.

[The whole of the Testimony of each of the three Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, before the Congressional Committee, is here reprinted from the Official Report of that Committee.]

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MAJ.-GEN. McCLELLAN'S TESTIMONY.

The following is the whole of Gen. George B. McClellan's evidence before the Congressional Committee on the conduct of the war.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28, 1862.

Major General GEORGE B. McCLELLAN sworn and examined.

By Mr. Gooch:

Question. Will you give to the Committee a concise account of your administration of the army of the Potomac, including its organization; the battle of Ball's Bluff; the obstruction of the Potomac by the batteries of the enemy; the long period of inaction of the army; the proposed movements, if any, prior to March, 1862; the peninsula campaign, including the withdrawal of the army from the James river; the action of your command in connection with the army of Virginia; the defenses of Washington; the Maryland campaign; and other subsequent events while the army was under your command? First, the organization of the army.

Answer. After the battle of Rich Mountain and Carrick's Ford, at Beverly, in Western Virginia, I received an order to turn over my command to General Rosecrans, and report to Washington at once. I was then engaged in preparing to move a column to the Kanawha, hoping to capture Wise and Floyd and their troops.

McCLELLAN ARRIVES AT WASHINGTON.

I reached Washington on the 26th of July, 1861. I was placed in command of the Division of the Potomac, made up of the Department of Washington and Northeastern Virginia, including all the troops on both sides of the Potomac. I found a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. The defenses of Washington were imperfect. There was nothing whatever on the Maryland side; and on the Virginia side merely some detached works controlling the principal roads. There was nothing to prevent the enemy occupying Arlington and other heights, from which they could have shelled the city.

The three months' regiments were being rapidly mustered out of the service. There was nothing here which deserved the name of an army. The old regiments were not instructed, and were not placed in positions suitable for the defense of the city.

HIS EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE THE ARMY.

My first effort was to reorganize the army and to construct a system of works which would enable a small number of troops to hold the capital. When I reached here the capital was really in danger. I think that if the enemy had advanced after the battle of Bull Run they might have taken Washington.

During the fall my efforts were directed *entirely towards the organization of the army*; my general object being to place Washington in a perfectly safe condition, and to organize an army which might operate on any line of operations, leaving Washington *entirely secure*.—(See Ball's Bluff testimony.)

BLOCKADE OF THE POTOMAC.

Q. I will now call your attention to the next point in the general question: the obstruction of

the Potomac river by the enemy during the fall of 1861 and the following winter. What efforts were made, if any, to prevent the obstructions, or to remove the obstructions after they were made?

A. In my judgment there were only two methods of counteracting the efforts of the enemy in that direction. First, by the employment of a strong naval force on the Potomac. Second, by the actual occupation of the Virginia bank of the river by our troops.

In August, 1861—I think before the 15th of the month—I wrote to the Secretary of the Navy, calling his attention to the necessity of a strong naval force on the Potomac. But the necessity for gunboats for blockading purposes was so great that the Navy Department was never able to place an adequate force on the river.

I do not think that the army was in a condition to have occupied the Virginia bank of the river much before it actually moved from Washington.

The question of attacking the rebel batteries on the Potomac was carefully examined. And the opinion ultimately formed was that it would require a general advance of the entire army. The idea of a direct attack upon the batteries from the water was abandoned in consequence of a report made by General Barnard, then chief engineer of the army the Potomac, who examined the points in question as carefully as circumstances permitted.

Q. Was there any attempt at co-operation of the army and the navy for the purpose of relieving the river from those obstructions?

A. There was no actual co-operation, for the reason that the navy never had an available force suitable for the purpose. I often discussed the matter with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and I think the Monitor was completed probably a week or ten days earlier than she would have otherwise been because I had asked for her to be used on the Potomac. I did all that I could to secure the co-operation of the navy in acting upon the rebel batteries upon the Potomac.

Q. Was there not a time agreed upon when the navy should furnish certain vessels, and the army a certain force of men, in order to attack these batteries?

A. I do not think that any final and specific arrangement was made. My impression is, that while the matter was under discussion, before it had been finally agreed upon, those batteries were abandoned by the rebels. I know that it was talked of, but I do not think it had assumed a final shape.

Q. Was there not an attempt at co-operation between the army and the navy to take possession of Matthias's Point before it had been occupied by the rebels?

A. Matthias's Point, I think, was never occupied by the rebels. I know we had parties there three or four times. From the time I reached Washington until I left, it was never occupied by any rebel guns.

Q. Then I will say Matthias's Point, or some other strategical point on the river. I do not remember the name of the point which has been referred to.

A. I cannot think of anything else that can be

alluded to by that question, except the design I have already referred to, of attacking some of those batteries at Freestone Point, which was abandoned in consequence of General Barnard's report. That was when General Hooker was at Budd's Ferry.

Q. Matthias's Point is one of the most important points on the river, is it not?

A. Yes; in this, that the channel is very narrow there, and approaches very near the point itself.

Q. How do you explain the fact that the enemy never did occupy that point?

A. It was too far from their main line. One of two things must have been necessary for them to have occupied that place. Either they must have intrenched themselves there, very heavily built a strong work that would protect itself, or to detach a large force for that purpose. I do not remember the distance now, but perhaps it is twenty-five miles from the nearest railway.

Q. And that would have extended their lines some fifteen or twenty miles as they then were?

A. I should think from twenty to twenty-five miles. It would have unduly weakened their line.

Q. Do you know at what time, or about what time, it became apparent that the enemy intended to construct batteries along from Evansport up, say to Cockpit Point?

A. I think they made their appearance there about the end of August. But I cannot be positive without referring back to papers. My impression is that it was about the end of August that they first showed their hand there.

Q. That is the narrowest part of the river, is it not, above Matthias's Point?

A. The channel approaches the Virginia shore there more nearly than at any other point.

Q. Did you not consider it of very great importance to prevent, or rid the river of, the obstructions, so that we might have the free navigation of the Potomac?

A. I never regarded it as of vital importance, because we had full means of supplying ourselves without regard to the Potomac. I think the importance was more a moral one than a physical, if I may use that expression.

Q. But, with the Potomac blockaded, we were dependent upon a single line of railroad almost wholly for supplies.

A. Yes; but we never failed to get what we wanted. I think in a previous answer I gave my general idea about the blockade of the Potomac; that it was necessary to hold the other bank of the river in order to prevent the obstruction of the Potomac by the enemy.

THE INACTIVITY OF THE ARMY.

Q. I will now call your attention to the next point in the general question: the long period of inaction of the army from the time you took command down to the 1st of March, when the movement of the army commenced.

A. I think I have already stated, in answer to some previous question, the general condition of the troops in Washington and the defenses of the city. That when I took command the defenses were incomplete, and the army was not in a satisfactory condition—not organized, and not efficient. I devoted my attention to the correction of those two points, viz.: The completion of the defenses and the organization of the army.

I do not think that the army was in a fit condition for offensive operations until the beginning of the year 1862. On the 1st of November I was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army, in place of General Scott. I at once turned my attention to the movement of troops in the West, in connection with the proposed movements of the Army of the Potomac. I then thought that the condition of things in the West was such that we could assume the offensive without difficulty early in December. I sent General Halleck to take command in Missouri, and General Buell in Kentucky. The general idea was this: first to gain complete possession of Missouri, and then, as rapidly as possible, to move a column on Knoxville and Chattanooga, in order to gain possession of the Memphis and Charleston railroad, and to aid the loyal men of Eastern Tennessee, Western North Carolina and South Carolina, and Northern Georgia. Gen. Halleck and Gen. Buell reported to me, immediately after assuming their commands, that the condition of things was not satisfactory; that an immense amount of preparation had still to be made, not only for the organization of troops, but to supply the necessary material. I did my best to supply the existing defects, frequently urging upon General Buell the necessity of a prompt movement upon Knoxville; always regarding that as of greater importance than the possession of Nashville—the possession of which I looked upon as the second operation to be undertaken in Tennessee. From the beginning I had looked upon it as essential that we should gain possession of the Memphis and Charleston railroad, in order to cut the railroad communication between the valley of the Mississippi and the Atlantic slope before making a direct movement upon Richmond.

NUMBERS OF THE ARMY.

Q. What did the army of the Potomac number, approximately—say on the first of November, 1861?

A. I cannot answer that question with any degree of accuracy without referring to papers; but I have a recollection that about the first of November I stated, in a letter written to the Secretary of War, that, after providing for the garrisons of Washington, Baltimore, &c., there were about 65,000 or 70,000 men available for active operations. That is a general recollection; I cannot answer the question decidedly.

Q. Do you remember how many you allowed at that time for garrisoning the fortifications about Washington?

A. I think from 30,000 to 35,000 men. The estimate of the Chief of Engineers and Artillery for the full garrisoning of Washington was a little less than 34,000 men; and I think that estimate had been made prior to the first of November. That number—I will call it 34,000—included the reserves, and provided for resistance against an attack on either bank of the river.

Q. That would make the whole army of the Potomac, with the exception of the troops at Baltimore, a little over 100,000 men on the 1st of November, would it not?

A. Yes; I think it would.

Q. Was it not much larger than that on the 1st of November?

A. I recollect this letter to the Secretary of War, and my impression is that the number 65,-

000 or 70,000, or something like that, was stated as available for active operations. I cannot give a precise answer to that question without referring to the returns.

Q. Do you know how much the army was increased after the 1st of November? I mean down to the time when you made your forward movement, or at the period prior to that time, when it was the largest.

A. I do not remember the greatest strength of the army; but my recollection is pretty clear that I never had, after I left Washington, more than 107,000 men for duty. That was the largest return I had; I mean on the peninsula campaign. I think that after the battle of Antietam I had a larger number.

THE ENEMY'S STRENGTH.

Q. What did you estimate the number of the enemy opposing you here, including all in Eastern Virginia, except the force at Norfolk, during the month of November, 1861?

A. I think the estimate formed at that time of the strength of the enemy was about 150,000.

Q. Where were the enemy at that time—I mean the principal points?

A. Their right was in the vicinity of Fredericksburg. I think that at that time they had some small detachments as far down as Tappahannock. Their main force was in the vicinity of Manassas, their left extending to Leesburg and Winchester.

Q. I believe that, just prior to your movement at the end of February, 1862, there was an estimate made of the force of the enemy, was there not?

A. Very probably; I do not now remember it.

Q. I am informed the estimate then was 60,000; can you tell me whether that was probably the estimate?

A. I never regarded the force of the enemy so low as 60,000.

Q. You do not remember the estimate at that time?

A. No; I do not.

CONDITION OF McCLELLAN'S ARMY.

Q. At the first of November, 1861, what was the discipline and organization of the Army of the Potomac? Was it not nearly as good as it was at any subsequent time?

A. No; the armament was incomplete, and the discipline was by no means good; it was by no means so effective an army, in my opinion.

Q. At what period, in your opinion, was the Army of the Potomac the most effective?

A. I think they improved in efficiency and discipline every day they remained here; and the army was decidedly better armed, and a better army, and more efficient, the day it left here than it ever was before. One thing should be stated here; that, during the last two or three months—I cannot pretend to fix the exact time—the armament of the troops was very materially improved. I am sure that, at the period you allude to, about the first of November, the armament was very incomplete, and very decided improvements were made after that time, which have materially changed results.

Q. The weather continued good, did it not, during the fall, and down to the 10th or 12th of January, 1862, and the roads good?

A. I think not so late as that. I was taken ill before Christmas, and I recollect that the day I was last out was a terrible day; the roads were very bad. I was confined to my bed for three or four weeks. My impression is that the roads became bad in December, in the latter half of December.

Q. During the months of November and December, was it or not true that the army, men and officers, were expecting and desirous of active service?

A. My recollection is pretty clear that the general officers with whom I was most thrown in contact still desired more time to prepare their troops. The majority of them did not regard the army as then prepared for offensive operations.

THE REBEL POSITION.

Q. When the enemy were at Manassas and Centreville, from what points did they receive their supplies? Where was their principal base of supplies?

A. They drew their supplies mainly by the Orange and Alexandria railroad—that is, the troops who were near Centreville and Manassas. Those who were near Aquia drew their supplies by the Fredericksburg and Richmond railroad.

Q. And from what point or points?

A. Those who were supplied by the Orange and Alexandria road drew them mainly, I think, from Manassas Junction. The others drew them from Fredericksburg, or, rather, from a little station between Fredericksburg and Aquia, where Holmes had his headquarters.

Q. Did Richmond ever hold the same relation to them as Washington did to us for supplies?

A. Everything passed through there, I think.

Q. So that it was really the general base of supplies?

A. In general terms—yes. Of course, a great deal came from Staunton, by Gordonsville, that never passed through Richmond.

Q. It was true, then, was it not, that when the enemy was at Centreville and Manassas, that portion of their force was some 100 or 120 miles from their principal base of supplies?

A. Yes; I should think so.

Q. Suppose you had operated against the enemy from Washington during the month of November, with how great a force do you think they could have opposed you?

A. I think, with certainty, considerably over 100,000 men.

Q. With a force greater than the force that you could have taken against them?

A. I think so. That was my impression then, and my impressions at that time were certainly as correct as they are now.

Q. Could you not, in November, or about that time, by moving forward, have threatened to destroy their communication with their base of supplies, and obliged them to come out from Centreville and Manassas and give battle, at least upon equal terms?

A. I do not think that the army of the Potomac was fit for such a movement in November. The only feasible plan for turning their position at Manassas would have been by crossing the Occoquan and moving on Brentsville, or some point to the southwest of that; and such a movement would have exposed our own communica-

tions with our lines of supplies, and a battle won in that vicinity would not, in my judgment, have produced decisive results. I do not think that the movement in question would have been practicable or prudent in November.

THE REBEL RETREAT.

Q. Did you or not regard the retreat of the enemy from Manassas, and their falling back upon Richmond, as a misfortune to us?

A. I regarded it as a misfortune only in this: that it gave them more time to concentrate on the new line of operations that we were about to adopt. I had hoped to be able to throw at least a portion of the army on the new line of operations before the enemy evacuated Manassas. But I regarded the evacuation of Manassas as a necessary consequence of our moving on the general line of the Peninsula. I mean by that any line based on the lower Chesapeake.

THE PENINSULA MOVEMENT.

Q. Was that movement to which you refer proposed or designed before the evacuation of Manassas?

A. Yes.

Q. And in what manner was it proposed that it should be accomplished; how was it proposed that your new line of operations should be reached?

A. It was intended to move the army in transports, by detachments of 35,000 to 40,000 at a time, to the new base of operations on the lower Chesapeake bay.

Q. From what point or points was the army to embark in the transports?

A. The points first designated were Annapolis and a point on the Potomac below Aquia creek—below Hooker's position.

Q. You mean those were the two points from which it was first proposed to move?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you anticipate that that movement could be made *without the knowledge of the rebels* and in such a manner as to enable you to cut off or intercept their retreat from Manassas and Centreville to Richmond?

A. *I do not think that we could entirely intercept their retreat to Richmond*; but the chances were that, if this movement was fairly started before they were aware of it, we could fight them in front of Richmond, to their disadvantage, before they could get all their troops in hand.

Q. Do you mean by that that you expected to intercept their retreat to Richmond in such a manner as to divide their forces, leaving a part of it on this side of the point where you intercept their communications, and then fight the balance of it at Richmond?

A. In reply to that, I can only repeat that I hoped, if proper secrecy was observed, to reach the vicinity of Richmond before they could concentrate all their troops there; that they could not get all their troops down from Manassas, &c., before we got there.

NORFOLK.

Q. Was it proposed by any one, at any time during the early part of last winter, that Norfolk should be taken?

A. I do not remember any formal proposition to that effect, although that matter may well have been talked of, as many other points were.

Q. During the early part of last winter could not a force of 30,000 or 40,000 men have been concentrated suddenly at Fortress Monroe, and Norfolk captured and the Merrimack destroyed, without incurring any great hazard to us?

A. Such a thing was possible, but would have been difficult. I do not think it would have promoted the general objects of the war. I looked upon the fall of Norfolk as a necessary consequence of a movement upon Richmond.

Q. Would not the destruction of the Merrimack have been a great point gained, and have rendered the movement upon Richmond, by way of the James or York rivers, very much more safe?

A. As things turned out, yes. But I do not think that the importance of the Merrimack was appreciated until she came out. I remember very well that the Navy Department thought that the Congress and Cumberland were capable of taking care of the Merrimack. The question of taking Norfolk after the Merrimack made its appearance and destroyed the Congress and Cumberland, was seriously discussed. The conclusion arrived at was, that it was better not to depart from the direct movement upon Richmond, under all the circumstances of the case.

PROPOSED MOVEMENTS.

Q. Was there any important movement of the army of the Potomac contemplated or proposed prior to the first of March, 1862, with the exception of those to which you have already referred?

A. There was a movement contemplated by the President to cross the Occoquan, and move upon Brentsville.

Q. Was that movement approved by you?

A. It was not; I wrote against it. The only other movement I remember was a movement to gain possession of the batteries on the Potomac. That was a movement of the mass of the army to cross the Occoquan, and gain possession of the batteries on the lower Potomac. That was directed by the President, but rendered unnecessary by the evacuation of their positions by the rebels.

EVACUATION OF MANASSAS.

Q. Do you know what caused the enemy to evacuate Manassas when they did?

A. I do not. But my impression has always been that they got wind of our intended movement to the lower Chesapeake, and that that was the main cause of their leaving.

Q. Were you intending to carry out that movement at the time they evacuated Manassas?

A. Yes.

Q. That was then the proposed movement of the army?

A. Yes.

Q. When did you first learn of the evacuation of Manassas, and what was then done?

A. The first information that I regarded as reasonably authentic was received on Sunday the 9th of March. The President and Secretary of War were at my house when I received it. I stated to them my intention to cross the river in order to obtain the best information I could, and to act according to circumstances. During the night of the 9th I ordered two regiments of cavalry forward under Colonel Averill, to verify the fact, and I directed a general advance of the army in the direction of Manassas, hoping that I might possibly reach their rear-guard and inflict some loss upon it, and desiring also to get the

men out of their old camps and put them in better condition for active service. The mass of the army advanced to the vicinity of Fairfax Court-House. I myself went to Manassas. I sent a strong cavalry force, supported by some infantry of General Sumner's command, as far as the Rapahannock, thus forcing the enemy to burn the railroad bridge over that river, and showing that their evacuation was complete. That gave me the strongest reason to believe that there was no immediate danger of their returning by that line. The army returned from the vicinity of Fairfax Court-House to Alexandria, where it embarked for Fort Monroe as rapidly as transportation was ready for it.

Q. Then it was not your intention, when the army was moved forward towards Manassas, after having heard that the enemy had evacuated, to continue the pursuit beyond the point you reached?

A. Not unless I saw some great advantage to be gained. If I could have caught their rear-guard I should have done so.

WHO PROPOSED THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN.

Q. When and by whom was the movement on Richmond by way of Yorktown first proposed, and when was it finally determined upon?

A. I do not remember who first proposed it. It was a thing more or less discussed before the movements of the army were finally determined upon. It was finally determined upon when the army was at Fairfax Court-House.

Q. Was it determined upon in a council of war, the proceedings of which have been made public?

A. Yes; I think it was.

Q. And it was then decided, was it not, that the army should go by way of Alexandria?

A. Alexandria was adopted as the most convenient point of embarkation.

Q. Were there not at that time a large number of transports at Annapolis which were to have been used in the former movement to which you have referred?

A. I think that many of them were there.

Q. And it then became necessary to move them to Alexandria?

A. Many of them. The most of them were brought to Alexandria. There was a large depot of wagons at Perryville that was taken right down that way.

Q. When you first heard that the enemy were evacuating Manassas, could not a rapid movement have been made across the Occoquan, so as to reach the Orange and Alexandria railroad and cut off or intercept the retreat of the enemy?

A. I think not.

Q. What were the reasons that influenced the decision in favor of the movement by way of Yorktown?

A. In preference to the direct movement by way of Manassas?

Q. Yes.

A. I think no one regarded the line by way of Manassas as a practicable one, it being so long. The difficulty of guarding our communications was almost insuperable; and it allowed the enemy to take up position after position between Manassas and Richmond. The other line gave us the advantage of water transportation, and rendered the largest possible amount of the force available for active operations, there being so few necessary to guard the depots and communications.

Q. Was it not a serious objection to the movement by way of the Peninsula, that it did not cover Washington?

A. Not in my judgment.

Q. By your answer do you mean that the advantages gained were more than enough to compensate for the fact that Washington was not covered by that movement?

A. I regarded the defenses of Washington as adequate for its protection, and that the movement of the army of the Potomac would necessarily draw from in front of Washington the force that had previously threatened it. My mind had always been clear and distinct that the moment the army moved on any line from the Lower Chesapeake, the rebels must necessarily abandon Manassas. I never doubted that a second—always bearing in mind that the defenses of Washington were complete.

Q. When your army was on the peninsula, could not the enemy have reached Washington easier and sooner than your army could have been brought back?

A. Yes; but they would never have come here; or, if they had, they would never have got back. If the enemy had moved on Washington, I not only would have gained possession of Richmond, but I would have cut off the retreat of their army, and they never would have got back.

Q. Was it not almost certain, beforehand, that the withdrawal of your army to a position where it did not cover Washington would cause the enemy at least to make a threat or feint of an attack upon Washington, which would lead to a panic, and, perhaps, to a recall of your army, or a portion of it?

A. I think not. I do not think that anything occurred, prior to the battle of Cedar Mountain, which should have justified a panic in Washington. The only advance of the enemy that I remember at all was that of Jackson upon General Banks. When I heard of that I telegraphed to the President that I believed the intention to be simply to *prevent reinforcements being sent to me!* I had no idea that it meant a serious threat upon Washington.

THE DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON.

Q. When you took the army to the peninsula, how many troops were left for the defense of Washington; where were they stationed, and by whom were they commanded?

A. There has been published a letter which I wrote on board the steamer Commodore, on the 1st of April last, to the Adjutant-General, giving the number of troops left and their stations. The numbers there given were furnished to me by my Adjutant-General from the latest and most authentic returns in his possession. I recollect that the aggregate was something over 70,000, but I cannot give the details.

Q. In that estimate were included the troops under Generals Fremont, Banks, and Dix?

A. I think not General Dix. One division of Fremont, General Blenker's, was ordered to remain in the valley of the Shenandoah, under Banks's command, whenever he wanted it, until the state of affairs were perfectly well known—Jackson disposed of. The authority existed from the Secretary of War to retain that division there until the state of things was entirely cleared up. Banks's command was included. The original

order to him was to take up a line at Manassas, and along the railway to Chester Gap and Strasburg. I have stated already that the enemy had been forced to burn the railroad bridge over the Rappahannock.

NUMBERS OF TROOPS.

Q. What was the number of your command when you landed on the peninsula?

A. Before the arrival of Franklin's and McDowell's corps I had about 85,800 men.

Q. How many had Franklin?

A. He had, I suppose, about 11,000 or 12,000. The largest number of men I had for duty at any time on the peninsula was 107,000 men. That, I think, was in the latter part of June, after McCall's division had arrived.

Q. Do you know the force at Yorktown when Heintzelman, with his corps, landed on the peninsula?

A. I do not know positively; but my belief is that there were not at that time much more than Magruder's original command, which, I think, we had always estimated at from 15,000 to 20,000 men. Movements of troops had been going on across the James river to the peninsula for some days before my arrival. I remember that immediately upon my arrival at Fort Monroe I was told that quite a large number of troops had been crossed over to Yorktown from the south bank of the James. I therefore hurried my own movements, and started from Fort Monroe sooner than I would have done. From the best information that I have been able to get, I think that the large masses of the reinforcements arrived in Yorktown from one to two days before I reached its vicinity. Johnston himself arrived there the day before I did.

REBEL DEFENSES.

Q. At what period had the works of the enemy at Yorktown been constructed?

A. Probably several months before I arrived there. We found at other points on the peninsula—at Big Bethel, at Howard's Bridge, at Young's Mill—extensive series of intrenchments that evidently had been erected months before. There was no sign of fresh work about them at all.

Q. Did you know of those works before you landed on the peninsula?

A. No; we did not know of the line of works along the Warwick. We knew that Yorktown itself was surrounded by a continuous line of earthworks, but we did not know of the line of Warwick.

Q. In your opinion, could Heintzelman have captured Yorktown by a rapid movement immediately upon his landing upon the peninsula?

A. No; I do not think he could have done it. When we did advance, we found the enemy intrenched and in strong force wherever we approached. The nature and extent of his position along the Warwick river was not known to us when we left Fort Monroe.

M'CLELLAN'S WANT OF KNOWLEDGE.

Q. Was the topography of the peninsula well understood, so far as you know, by any one connected with your command when you commenced that campaign?

A. Our maps proved entirely inaccurate, and did us more harm than good, for we were constantly misled by them.

THE SIEGE OF YORKTOWN.

Q. Could not this line of works have been assaulted, when you arrived before them in full force, with a fair prospect of success?

A. I think not. I resorted to the operations of a siege after a more careful personal examination than a commanding general usually gives to such things; and I was fully satisfied that the course I adopted was the best under the circumstances.

Q. You did not open your batteries as they were finished, one by one, but waited until all were ready, did you not?

A. We did, and expected to open fire from them all on Monday morning. A few shots were fired for a special purpose from battery No. 1, against vessels landing at the wharf.

Q. Would it not have been better to have opened your batteries as they were completed, without waiting for the completion of all of them?

A. I think decidedly not; because they would probably have been overwhelmed by the concentrated fire of the enemy. The object was to wait until we had such an overwhelming force at our disposal as would crush everything before us.

Q. What time was occupied from the commencement of your operations before Yorktown until its evacuation?

A. Just about a month, as near as may be. I think the evacuation was on the 4th of May, and I left Fortress Monroe on the 4th of April.

Q. The enemy retreated from Yorktown to Williamsburg, did they not?

A. They were overtaken in their retreat at Williamsburg. The most of their army, I think, did not intend halting at Williamsburg. We overtook them there. They had passed it, and then came back. I think if our cavalry had been a few hours later, probably no fight at all would have occurred there. That action was brought on, I think, by the fact that our cavalry caught their rear-guard, and forced them to bring back their troops.

Q. There was a line of earthworks at Williamsburg?

A. Yes; a strong line of detached earthworks.

Q. Will you give a concise description of the battle of Williamsburg, and state by what troops and under what generals it was fought?

WHAT M'CLELLAN KNEW ABOUT WILLIAMSBURG.

A. As soon as I knew that the enemy had evacuated Yorktown, I ordered the cavalry under General Stoneman, with the horse artillery, in pursuit. I directed the divisions of Kearney and Hooker to move by the direct road from Yorktown to Williamsburg, while the divisions of Smith, Couch, and Casey were ordered by the road from Warwick Court-House to Williamsburg. Franklin's division, which was on the transports, was ordered up to Yorktown, with the intention of moving it to the vicinity of West Point, in order to intercept the retreat of the enemy. The divisions of Richardson, Sedgwick, and Porter were moved to the immediate vicinity of Yorktown, ready either to support the troops who had advanced by land or to go by water, as circumstances might render advisable. *The general instructions given to the troops ordered in pursuit were to overtake the enemy and inflict as much damage as possible.* This was on Sunday. That night I heard that the cavalry had come up with

the enemy in the vicinity of Williamsburg, that they had been obliged to fall back from the works, and that the infantry were within a half hour's march, rapidly approaching, and would undoubtedly carry the position. General Sumner was in command of the troops ordered to the front. I remained at Yorktown on Sunday, and on Monday morning engaged in arranging for the forwarding of Franklin's division to West Point, and in consultation with the naval commander, as well as other duties incident to my position. I heard nothing from the front on Monday morning that gave me any idea that there was anything serious involved. I heard nothing from General Sumner. The first intimation I had that there was anything at all serious was from Governor Sprague, who came to me at Yorktown and told me that things were not going on well in front. This was, I think, about noon; it may have been half an hour or an hour one way or the other. He told me that things were not going well, and that my presence in the front was necessary. As soon as I heard that, I took a boat, went down to camp where my horses were, and immediately left for the front, meeting on the way the Prince de Joinville and an aid of General Sumner, who had been sent back to hurry me up. Up to this time I had had no information from General Sumner, or any one in command, that there was anything at all serious in front. I arrived on the ground, I should think, about an hour or an hour and a half before dark. I acquainted myself, as rapidly as possible, with the state of affairs, and immediately ordered reinforcements to General Hancock, who was heavily engaged when I arrived, and I endeavored to communicate with General Heintzelman who was on the left of the position. I was told that it was impossible to communicate directly with our left under General Heintzelman. I sent an officer—Captain Alexander—with a company to endeavor to open communication with General Heintzelman, that I might learn the state of affairs there. He returned after dark with the information that it was impracticable to get through the marsh. I then went around some seven or eight miles, by way of the rear, to communicate.

During the night I heard from General Heintzelman that Hooker's division had been badly cut up, and could not be relied upon for very heavy work in the morning; that Kearney's division, although it had suffered severely, could be fully relied upon to hold its own; and that no advance could be made in that quarter without heavy reinforcements.

I felt satisfied, from what I knew of Hancock's position, that the battle was won; that he had occupied the decisive point, and gained possession of a portion of the enemy's line; and that they must make a night retreat, or we would have greatly the advantage of them in the morning. So fully was I satisfied of that, that I countermanded orders that I had given in the afternoon for the advance of Richardson's and Sedgwick's divisions to the front, and sent them back to Yorktown to go by water; feeling sure that the battle was won.

During the night the enemy abandoned their position. We sent the cavalry in pursuit; took a few prisoners and a few guns. The condition of the roads was such that we could not promptly advance the army. We could not for more than

forty-eight hours after the battle even feed the men on the ground where they stood; we could not get the supplies to them.

Q. Had there not been a great misapprehension as to the character of the roads and the nature of the soil on the peninsula?

A. I was deceived. *I expected to find the nature of the soil much more favorable than it was.*

Q. What was the object in sending Franklin and Sedgwick to West Point by water, and what was accomplished by that movement?

A. The object was to endeavor to cut off the retreat of the enemy. But Franklin's movements were so delayed by bad weather as to defeat the accomplishment of that object. It is possible that, if Franklin had not made that movement, the enemy might have made a different stand at some point north of Williamsburg. But that is a mere matter of opinion.

Q. Did you suppose, at the time Yorktown was evacuated by the enemy, that the relative strength and position of the two armies were such that Richmond could easily be taken?

A. Not easily. I thought that I could take it; but I thought that the enemy would bring to bear a larger force than I had.

Q. How much time was occupied in the movement from Williamsburg to the Chickahominy, and what is the distance from Williamsburg to the Chickahominy?

A. I think it is about fifty miles; that is, to New Bridge.

Q. It has been stated that some two weeks were occupied in the movement from Williamsburg to the Chickahominy; will you explain the reason for that?

A. I do not remember the exact time. I can only say that we were very much delayed after the affair at Williamsburg by the condition of the roads and the difficulty in bringing up supplies. We had a great deal of trouble of that kind before reaching the Chickahominy. I think the movement was made as rapidly as possible under the circumstances.

The further examination of the witness was postponed until Monday next to 11 o'clock A. M.

WASHINGTON, March 2, 1863.

General GEORGE B. McCLELLAN, examination resumed.

By Mr. Gooch:

THE JAMES RIVER LINE.

Q. Could not the advance on Richmond from Williamsburg have been made with better prospect of success by the James river than by the route pursued; and what were the reasons for taking the route adopted?

A. I do not think that the navy at that time was in a condition to make the line of the James river perfectly sure for our supplies. The line of the Pamunkey offered greater advantages in that respect. The place was in a better position to effect a junction with any troops that might move from Washington on the Fredericksburg line. I remember that the idea of moving on the James river was seriously discussed at that time. But the conclusion was arrived at that, under the circumstances then existing, the route actually followed was the best. I think the Merrimack was destroyed while we were at Williamsburg.

Q. Did you have any consultation with the

navy in relation to their ability to keep the James river open and protect your line of supplies?

A. About the time of the evacuation of Yorktown—perhaps a day or two afterwards—I requested the naval officers commanding in the vicinity of Fort Monroe to send vessels up the James river, and my recollection is that some objection was made to it, and that it required the personal action of the President himself to get them started up the river. There were at that time comparatively few naval vessels in the vicinity of Fort Monroe fit to go up the James river.

FAIR OAKS AND SEVEN PINES.

Q. After leaving Williamsburg you met with no serious resistance from the enemy until after the crossing of Bottom's Bridge, did you?

A. Merely cavalry affairs. There were some sharp cavalry affairs, but no resistance in large force.

Q. The first engagement which the left wing of your army had with the enemy was at Fair Oaks and Seven Pines?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you give us a concise account of those two battles, or of that battle, whichever it may be?

A. The battle occurred, I think, on the last day of May and the first of June. At the beginning of the battle General Keyes's corps was encamped in the vicinity of Seven Pines; Casey's division was in front; Couch's division a short distance in the rear, on the main road to Bottom's Bridge; Heintzelman's corps was on the same side of the Chickahominy, in the general vicinity of Savage's Station; Sumner's corps was on the left bank of the Chickahominy, about half way between Bottom's Bridge and New Bridge; the corps of Franklin and Porter were also on the left bank of the Chickahominy, near New Bridge. Great efforts had been made to insure the communication between the two banks of the Chickahominy by suitable bridges; but, owing to the nature of the work, and the high stage of the water in the Chickahominy, a great deal still remained to be done to complete those bridges. The attack commenced on Casey's division, I think, about one o'clock. I was at the time confined to my bed by illness, and the first intimation I received of the affair was the sound of the musketry. Without waiting to hear from General Keyes or General Heintzelman, I sent instructions to General Sumner to hold his corps in readiness to move to the scene of action. I did not hear anything for a long time from the field. I think the first I heard was from General Heintzelman, who reported that Casey's division had been completely broken, and was in full retreat. I ordered Sumner over as soon as I learned that his services were needed and the affair serious. General Sumner had, fortunately, on the receipt of the first order, actually stretched his command out on the road, so the heads of columns were at the bridges ready to cross when he received the order. The main part of his force crossed at the bridge near Dr. Trent's farm, and moved by the shortest route upon Fair Oaks, near which point he came in contact with the enemy's left, and drove them some little distance, thus relieving the pressure on the right of Heintzelman, who had moved up to support Keyes. The enemy renewed the attack on Sunday morning, but with

much less vigor than the day before. They were repulsed with comparative little difficulty, and our troops regained most of the ground lost the day before. The river rose very much on Sunday, so as to render the bridges by which Sumner had crossed entirely impracticable at an early hour in the afternoon. Those bridges were long structures of logs or corduroy, and a large portion of them were washed off by the rise of water. During the battle of Fair Oaks, and for some time after it, the ground was so boggy as to render it impracticable to move masses of artillery.

Q. The enemy had continued to hold their positions in front of New Bridge, had they not?

A. Yes.

Q. After crossing Bottom's Bridge, would it not have been advisable to have driven the enemy from their positions on the right bank of the river at New Bridge, and thus united the right and left wings of your army; could not that have been done?

A. I do not think it could have been done by a direct attack. At least the chances would have been immensely against the success of the effort. I mean by a direct attack, an attempt to cross the Chickahominy in the vicinity of New Bridge.

Q. Could you not at that point have attacked the position of the enemy with your whole force, your right wing operating on the left bank of the Chickahominy, and the left wing operating on the right bank; and if so, was their number and the strength of their position such that it could not have been carried?

A. I do not think that an attack in the manner suggested could have been successful before the completion of the bridges designed to secure complete communication between the two portions of the army.

Q. When were those bridges completed, or were they ever completed?

A. The most important ones were completed, I should think, about the 20th of May—not far from then.

Q. After the completion of the bridges, why was not the attempt made to drive the enemy from that position?

A. The main causes of the delay were, I think, the condition of the ground and *the necessity for finishing the defensive works regarded as necessary for the safety of the army should it meet with a disaster in the attack.*

Q. At what points were the defensive works to which you refer?

A. They were mainly in the vicinity of the battle-field of Fair Oaks, and then to the right of that, looking to the position of the enemy at New Bridge. The affair of the 25th of June was the beginning of the operations against the enemy. I had expected to attack the position in rear of New Bridge by the 26th or 27th of June, but was prevented by the series of occurrences known as the seven days' battle.

Q. Was the result of the battle of Fair Oaks and Seven Pines a defeat to the enemy?

A. Yes; I think it was.

Q. After that defeat, could not that point in front of New Bridge have been carried by an attack made, as I have before indicated, by both wings of your army?

A. The condition of the ground and of the Chickahominy, in my opinion, rendered such a movement impossible at that time.

Q. Immediately after the battle of Fair Oaks, could you not have advanced on Richmond? If not, why not?

A. I do not think it would have been possible at that time to have taken our artillery with us. The result of which, independently of all other considerations, would have been to have brought us in front of the enemy's works at Richmond without artillery, where they had heavy guns. That, and the condition of the bridges, were the principal reasons for not advancing at that time.

Q. The enemy retired, taking with them their artillery, after their defeat, did they not?

A. They had very few guns in action—I am not sure that they had any guns. It was on their part almost entirely an infantry affair.

Q. What was the strength of the left wing of your army—that part of the army which was on the right bank of the Chickahominy at that time?

A. Without the returns I could merely guess at it. There were four divisions—one a very weak one. I should think the strength of the four divisions must have been 30,000 men, perhaps.

Q. Did not the want of communication between the right and left wings of your army prevent your reaping those advantages which you might have otherwise obtained from the defeat of the enemy at Fair Oaks?

A. I think that if there had been reliable communication between the right wing and the centre and left wing, we would have gained greater advantages by the battle.

Q. It is true, is it not, that the enemy retreated in confusion after the battle of Fair Oaks, and that there was a panic in Richmond in consequence of that defeat?

A. I have no means now of telling in what condition the enemy retired; and I do not remember receiving information of any special panic in Richmond at that time. I do not remember how that was.

BATTLE OF GAINES'S MILL.

Q. When did you first know that Jackson's force were at Frederickshall, and that the enemy was meditating striking a blow on your right wing.

A. I think that the first vague rumors of Jackson being at Frederickshall reached me on the 24th of June; and on the afternoon of the 25th I received some other information. But I do not think I got what I regarded full authentic information until the 27th.

Q. How long before the battle of Gaines's Mill did you receive that information?

A. The day before, I think.

Q. What was the strength of your right wing just prior to the battle of Gaines's Mill.

A. At that time there were three divisions, the strength of which was probably less than 35,000 men. That is a mere estimate on my part, for I do not now remember what the strength was.

Q. As soon as you had reasonable cause to believe that the enemy proposed to attack you in force, should not the two wings of your army have been united to repel the attack? And was this done? And if not, why not?

A. The right wing was drawn in to the immediate vicinity of the bridges as soon as was practicable under the circumstances, after we knew definitely of Jackson's approach. The intentions of the enemy were difficult to divine. He ap-

peared in force on both banks of the Chickahominy, and made several sharp attacks on the right bank as well as on the left. So that I do not think more troops could wisely have been sent to the support of Porter, at Gaines's farm than were actually sent.

Q. Whatever might have been the intentions of the enemy, as an attack was to be made by him, would it not have been better to have placed both wings of our army on the same side of the Chickahominy prior to the battle of Gaines's Mill?

A. I do not think that they ought to have been brought to the same side of the river before they actually were.

Q. What advantage was gained by leaving the right wing of our army to be attacked by a greatly superior force?

A. It prevented the enemy from getting on our flank and rear; and, in my opinion, enabled us to withdraw the army and its material.

Q. Will you explain what was done by the right wing of our army at the time, or about the time, the left wing was engaged with the enemy, which saved our flank from attack, and enabled the army and its material to be withdrawn?

A. By desperate fighting they inflicted so great a loss upon the enemy as to check his movement on the left bank of the river, and gave us time to get our material out of the way.

Q. Could not the enemy have been held in check, with less loss and exposure to us, if our whole army had been placed on the right bank of the Chickahominy before the battle of Gaines's Mill, and his attempt to cross resisted?

A. No; I think it was better as it was.

Q. What portion of the left wing, if any, was sent to General Porter during the battle of Gaines's Mill, and at what time was it sent? And was any portion of it ordered to his assistance and then recalled? And if so, why was it recalled?

A. Slocum's division was ordered over. I cannot give the hours without consulting papers.

Q. Was it recalled after it started to go over?

A. I have no recollection of Slocum being stopped. If there was anything of that kind, it must have been at a very early period of the day. I think two brigades of General Sumner's command crossed over in the afternoon. Two brigades of General Keyes's command came up late in the day, but I do not think they crossed the river.

Q. Did you suppose the enemy to be your superior in strength before the battle of Gaines's Mill?

A. My recollection is that I did.

Q. And did you suppose at that time that you would be obliged to retreat?

A. It was a contingency I thought of. But my impression is, that up to the time of the battle of Gaines's Mill I still hoped that we should be able to hold our own.

Q. If the enemy was your superior in numbers, was that not the strongest reason for not fighting him, except you were concentrated? And, in case he himself divided, placing a part of his force on one side of the Chickahominy and a part on the other, as he did, would not that furnish you, though inferior, a chance to defeat him in detail?

A. We had great difficulty in ascertaining the intentions of the enemy! I do not see that, under the circumstances at the time, we could have done differently from what we did do.

Q. When the enemy had concentrated their

force on the left bank of the Chickahominy, would it or not have been possible for you, by a concentration of your force on the right bank of the river, to have marched directly upon Richmond with the main body of your army, and captured that place, leaving such force as might be deemed advisable to check his passage of the river?

A. I think not; I think the enemy had force enough still on the right bank to have prevented such a movement. It was our impression at the time distinctly.

Q. Our whole force was withdrawn to the right bank of the Chickahominy on the night of the battle of Gaines's Mill, was it not?

A. Yes, during the night. I think the last troops left about daybreak, or shortly after.

Q. And when did the retreat to the James river commence?

A. I think the trains commenced moving that night.

Q. Were you with the right or left wing of the army during the battle of Gaines's Mill?

A. I was on the right bank of the river, at Dr. Trent's house, as the most central position.

THE RETREAT TO JAMES RIVER, FORMERLY CALLED
"CHANGE OF BASE."

Q. Will you give us a concise statement of the retreat of the army to the James river, including the battles of Savage's Station, Glendale, and Malvern Hill?

A. As soon as the retreat—the movement to the James river—was determined upon, I gave orders for improving the crossings of White Oak swamp, and sent some staff-officers with an escort of cavalry to the James river to bring me back the best information about the roads. The trains were put in motion, I think, on the night of the 28th of June, or, it may have been, on the morning of the 29th; and, as the great trouble was to handle that immense mass of wagons, I tried to get them out of the way the first thing. We had only one road practicable for the trains and troops to go on after leaving White Oak swamp. As soon as the wagons were well out of the way, Sumner, Franklin, and Heintzelman were ordered to take a position near Savage's Station, and to hold it until night. In the meantime the commands of Keyes and Porter were pushed across the White Oak swamp, in order to gain possession of the roads coming in from Richmond between the White Oak swamp and the James river, and cover the further movement of the trains. Sumner and Franklin were attacked at Savage's Station, and, after a severe contest, *repulsed the enemy*. After night they crossed the White Oak swamp. I think the whole command got over by daybreak in the morning. The trains were kept moving day and night. The troops were placed in position from White Oak swamp to the vicinity of Malvern Hill to cover the movement. They were attacked in the afternoon at several points along the line—at White Oak swamp mainly by artillery. But at Nelson's farm the most serious attack by the enemy in force was made, and the fighting there continued until after dark. The divisions that were most warmly engaged were those of Hooker, Kearney, and McCall; while, still further on the left, a pretty serious attack was made by the Wise Legion, I think—General Wise's command. The enemy were again re-

pulsed at all points. During the night the army was concentrated upon Malvern Hill. A portion of the trains were at Haxall's, and the rest at Harrison's Bar. Early in the morning the troops were placed in position at Malvern Hill, and they were attacked early in the afternoon. The most serious effort of the enemy was about the left of our position, *no attack being made on our right, where I was most apprehensive of it*. I determined, *even after a signal repulse of the enemy*, to withdraw from Malvern Hill and go to Harrison's Bar, mainly for two reasons: the first was, that the position was rather too extensive a one for the number of men; the second was, the necessity of getting below City Point, the channel being so narrow at City Point, so near that bank of the river, that it was the opinion of the naval officers that we could not count upon getting our supplies that far up. The night after Malvern the movement was continued upon Harrison's Bar, which was a very favorable position for the gunboats, the ground on either bank being completely swept by their fire; steps were taken at once to strengthen the position. Some little time after we reached Harrison's Bar we occupied a point on the other side, which was intrenched, and gave us a secure *debouche* on the south bank of the river.

Q. On or about the 28th of June, after the battle of Gaines's Mills, was it not thought necessary to destroy the baggage of the army, and were not orders given to that effect?

A. I have no recollection of any such order being given. A certain amount of property was destroyed at some of the railway stations.

Q. But no order was given for the general destruction of the baggage of the army?

A. No. I have not the slightest recollection of any such order.

WHO DID THE FIGHTING.

Q. By whom was the battle of Savage's Station fought? Did you yourself direct the movements of the troops, or were they directed by the corps commanders?

A. I had given general orders for the movements of the troops, *but the fighting was done under the direct orders of the corps commanders*.

Q. By whom were the movements of the troops in fighting directed the day after the battle at Savage's Station?

A. I gave the general orders, and each corps was commanded by its own commander.

Q. Who selected the positions and directed the movements of the troops at the battle of Malvern Hill?

A. I selected the positions *in a general way*; that is, I rode over the whole position in the morning, indicating to the different commanders the approximate positions they were to occupy. There were parts of the position near our right that were, I think, selected by General Barnard and General Humphrey. *More or less change was made by every corps commander from the general position that I had selected*.

Q. At what hour in the morning were you on the field at the time of the battle of Malvern Hill, and at what time did you leave?

A. I was on the ground very shortly after daylight, and, I presumed, occupied some four hours in riding over the position. I was again on the ground in the afternoon—I should think somewhere about two or half-past two o'clock—

and was over the whole position again at that time.

Q. Had the fighting commenced in the morning before you left?

A. No, sir; no enemy in sight.

WHERE M'CLELLAN KEPT HIMSELF.

Q. At what point or points were you from the time you left the field until you returned?

A. I was at headquarters, near Haxall's house.

Q. Were you down to the river, or on board the gunboats during any part of that day, between the time you left the field and your return to it?

A. I do not remember; *it is possible I may have been, as my camp was directly on the river.*

Q. How far was the gunboat from Haxall's?

A. There were generally some gunboats in the immediate vicinity of Haxall's.

Q. How far was that from where the heaviest fighting was during the day?

A. From Haxall's to the point where the heaviest fighting was, I suppose, *two miles and a half or three miles.* There were parts of our line that were within half a mile, probably, or less than that, of the headquarters.

Q. Had the fighting ceased when you went back to the field in the afternoon, or was it still in progress?

A. Still in progress. The most serious fighting was after I went upon the ground the second time.

Q. To what points on the field did you go on your return?

A. I went over nearly the whole field. I commenced near the left, by a house that was there, and then passed around by the positions of General Sumner and General Heintzelman, to those on the extreme right. My apprehensions were for the extreme right. I felt no concern for the left and centre.

Q. Did you remain on the field during the remainder of the battle?

A. I came back to headquarters just about dark.

Q. The troops were withdrawn that night to Harrison's Bar?

A. Yes.

Q. Were they withdrawn in pursuance of a general order, or by direction of the corps commanders?

A. In pursuance of a general order.

WHY THE ARMY WAS WITHDRAWN FROM THE PENINSULA.

Q. Was the army withdrawn from the peninsula in accordance with your opinion?

A. It was not.

Q. Why did you not approve of it?

A. I thought the James river the true line of operations, and that the proper policy to be pursued was to reinforce the army of the Potomac, and continue the movement on Richmond in that direction.

Q. How many available men did you estimate that you had at Harrison's Bar, and how many more would you have required in order to make a successful attempt upon Richmond?

A. I think I had about 85,000 or 90,000 men at Harrison's Bar, and I would have undertaken another movement in advance with about 20,000 more of reinforcements. My view was, that *pretty much everything that the government could*

have controlled ought to have been massed on the James river. I did not think the enemy would trouble Washington so long as we had a powerful army in the vicinity of Richmond, and did not share the apprehensions for the safety of Washington that were entertained by a great many.

I asked for 50,000 men at first, on the ground that I thought the army should be as strong as possible, and as little as possible left to chances. When General Halleck came down to Harrison's Bar, my recollection is that he stated that 20,000, or something about that number, was all that could be had; and I said that I would try it again with that number. I have no recollection of having asked at a subsequent period for a greater number than 20,000 as a necessary preliminary to a movement.

Q. About how many men were lost in killed, wounded, and missing from your army from the 25th of June until you reached Harrison's Landing?

A. I think the loss was about 14,000; but I could not tell positively without looking at the returns.

Q. Will you state in what you consider your chances for success would have been greater with the addition of 20,000 men to the number which you had at Harrison's Landing than they were when you were in front of Richmond, and before Jackson had formed a junction with the rest of the rebel forces?

A. *I should have counted upon the effect of the battles which had just taken place upon the enemy!* We had then strong reason to believe that the enemy's losses had been very much heavier than our own, and that portions of his army were very much demoralized, especially after the battle of Malvern Hill.

Q. From whom did you receive the order to withdraw the army from the peninsula?

A. From General Halleck.

Q. To what point was it ordered?

A. To Aquia creek.

Q. To what point did it go?

A. A portion landed at Aquia, and the rest at Alexandria.

WHAT M'CLELLAN DID NOT DO FOR POPE.

Q. Will you give a concise statement of the assistance rendered by the army under your command to the army of Virginia?

A. I think, before the termination of the campaign of the army of Virginia, that it had been joined by the whole of the army of the Potomac, except some cavalry that had not arrived, and a portion of General Keyes's corps that was left at Yorktown in garrison. I think that every effort was made to hurry forward the troops, and to give cordial assistance to General Pope.

Q. Do you remember when and where you first received orders to forward troops to General Pope, if you received any?

A. The order was for the army of the Potomac to go to Aquia as rapidly as possible, and there they were met by orders from General Halleck to come here or go to Alexandria, as the case may be.

Q. And each corps, as it marched in pursuance of those orders, ceased to be under your command?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you receive any orders at Alexandria

to forward troops to the assistance of General Pope?

A. Yes; troops and supplies, and I sent everything down but my own guard.

Q. What position did you occupy after your arrival at Alexandria and you had forwarded the troops which had been under your command to the assistance of General Pope?

A. I was for some little time—one or two days, two or three days perhaps—without any position; merely at my camp without any command. On Monday, the 1st of September, I received verbal instructions from General Halleck to take command of the defenses of Washington. I was, however, expressly prohibited from, in any way, assuming any control over the troops under General Pope. I think it was on the next day after that that I was instructed verbally, by the President and General Halleck, to go out and meet the army, which was coming in, and to assume command of it when it approached the position that I considered it ought to occupy for defensive purposes, and to post it properly.

Q. How long did you remain in command of the defenses of Washington, and what orders did you next receive, and from whom?

A. I do not think that order, assigning the command of the defenses of Washington, was ever rescinded, or any other one issued in its place. I had only verbal communications with General Halleck before I started on the Antietam campaign, and it was never definitely decided, up to the time that I left, as to whether I was to go or not. I asked the question two or three times of General Halleck, whether I was to command the troops in the field? and he said it had not been determined; and I do not think that it ever was. I think that was one of those things that grew into shape itself. When the time came I went out.

Q. Did that portion of the army of the peninsula which landed at Aquia creek receive their directions to march to the assistance of General Pope from you or from General Halleck?

A. I think in every case direct from General Halleck.

Q. Did that portion which landed at Alexandria receive their instructions to march to the assistance of General Pope from you or from General Halleck?

A. All received the orders direct from General Halleck, except the commands of Franklin and Sumner. I think that Heintzelman landed at Alexandria, and that Hooker and Kearney both landed there. The orders for Franklin and Sumner were given through me, but by direction of General Halleck.

THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN.

Q. Did you have any interview with the President in relation to taking command of the troops for the Maryland campaign, or receive any instructions from him on that point?

A. I do not think he gave me any instructions after that morning when I was told to take command of the army in front of Washington. I do not think he gave me any instructions about the Maryland campaign.

Q. After you commenced the movement, did you receive any instructions from any one?

A. I received some telegrams that might be looked upon in the nature of instructions from General Halleck and from the President. The

general tenor of General Halleck's dispatches was, that I was committing an error by going so far away from Washington; that I was going rather too fast. He had the impression that the main force of the enemy was on the south side of the Potomac, and that they had only a small force in front of me to draw me on, and then they would come into Washington in rear. As late as the 13th of September I recollect a telegram of General Halleck, in which he pressed that same idea, and tells me that I am wrong in going so far away.

Q. Then the Maryland campaign was planned and conducted by you without any instructions from any one other than those which you have indicated as coming from General Halleck by telegraph?

A. I had conversations with General Halleck before starting, in reference to the positions given to the corps that were first thrown over on the Maryland side. The campaign assumed shape as it proceeded. When I left Washington, we knew very little about the position or intentions of the enemy, and nothing more definite could, at that time, be decided upon than to proceed carefully until we gained accurate information about the enemy, and to follow such a direction as would enable us to cover Washington, and, if necessary, Baltimore.

Q. Will you give a statement of the principal events connected with the Maryland campaign?

A. When at Frederick we found the original order issued to General D. H. Hill by direction of General Lee, which gave the orders of march for their whole army, and developed their intentions. The substance of the order was that Jackson was to move from Frederick by the main Hagerstown road, and, leaving it at some point near Middleburg, to cross the Potomac near Sharpsburg, and endeavor to capture the garrison of Martinsburg, and cut off the retreat of the garrison of Harper's Ferry in that direction. General McLaws was ordered, with his own command and the division of General Anderson, to move out by the same Hagerstown road and gain possession of the Maryland Heights, opposite Harper's Ferry. General Walker, who was then apparently somewhere near the mouth of the Monocacy, was to move through Lovettsville and gain possession of Loudon Heights, thus completing the investment of Harper's Ferry. General Longstreet was ordered to move to Hagerstown, with Hill to serve as a rear guard. Their reserve trains to Manassas, &c., were ordered to take a position either at Boonsboro' or Hagerstown, I have now forgotten which. It was directed in the same order that after Jackson, Walker, McLaws &c., had taken Harper's Ferry, they were to rejoin the main army at Hagerstown or Boonsboro'. That order is important in another sense. It shows very plainly that the object of the enemy was to go to Pennsylvania, or at least to remain in Maryland. Upon learning the contents of this order, I at once gave orders for a vigorous pursuit, throwing the main force by the Hagerstown road. Franklin's corps, on the left, was ordered to attack and carry Crampton's Pass, about four miles from the main road. The object of throwing Franklin in that direction was to facilitate the attack on the main pass, and to place him in position to afford relief to Harper's Ferry as promptly as possible. The battle of South Mountain occurred on Sun-

day, and, being successful at all points, gave us possession of the mountain range, and of the debouches into the Hagerstown valley. As soon as possible after daylight the next morning, when the condition of affairs was ascertained, the troops were ordered to pursue as promptly as possible. The corps commanded by General Sumner, General Hooker, and General Mansfield were ordered to follow the main turnpike. The corps of Burnside, and what there was up of Porter's corps, were ordered forward by a small road parallel to and on the left of the main pike; thus being in position to support either Franklin or the right, as might be necessary. Franklin was ordered to cross into Pleasant valley, and to do all that he could for the relief of Harper's Ferry. The orders given to the troops on the right were that, if they found the enemy on the march, to attack him at once; if they found him in a strong position, then to put our troops in position and make all the arrangements for an attack, but not to attack until I came up. The general result of those orders on that day was to bring the mass of the army in front of the rebel position at Sharpsburg, but too late to attack that day. Some of the troops could not even be got into position for bivouac until the morning. Franklin found in front of him a force too strong in numbers and position for him to attack. It was on that morning, about 9 o'clock, that Harper's Ferry surrendered. The last of Franklin's column got into Pleasant valley about 12, I think. I would say in regard to Harper's Ferry that, some days before I left Washington—when I first heard that the enemy had crossed into Maryland in strong force—I recommended that the garrison at Harper's Ferry should either be withdrawn entirely or withdrawn to Maryland Heights; and during our advance I did all I could to inform the garrison of our approach by firing cannon and by sending messengers to endeavor to make their way into Harper's Ferry.

ANTIETAM.

On the morning of the 16th a close examination of the ground was made, and preparations made for the attack. The plan decided upon was to attack their left. The corps of General Hooker was thrown across the Antietam *early in the forenoon of that day, the 16th!*—gained possession of the opposite ridge without serious resistance, and then turned to its left, moving along the crest of the ridge, advancing steadily until dark, having encountered very sharp resistance during the latter part of its march. And during the evening the corps of Mansfield was thrown over to support Hooker. Early on the morning of the 17th the corps of General Sumner was also pushed over the Antietam to support the troops already engaged. Franklin's corps arrived on the ground from Rohrer'sville in the course of the forenoon. The result of the day's fighting on our right was, that we gained a considerable portion of ground held by the enemy the night before, after a very stubborn resistance on his part—the fortunes of the day varying several times, but finally resulting in our favor. It became

necessary to throw Franklin's corps across the Antietam to support our right soon after it reached the field of battle. In the centre the effort was confined mainly to artillery practice. On the left Burnside crossed the river somewhere about noon, and, after severe fighting, gained possession of the height which was the object of his attack, but was finally obliged to yield it to the attack of a superior force, still holding a position on the further bank of the stream. The next morning I found that our loss had been so great, and there was so much disorganization in some of the commands, that I did not consider it proper to renew the attack that day, especially as I was sure of the arrival that day of two fresh divisions, amounting to about 15,000 men. As an instance of the condition of some of the troops that morning, I happen to recollect the returns of the first corps—General Hooker's corps—made the morning of the 18th, by which there were about 3,500 men reported present for duty. Four days after that the returns of the same corps showed 13,500. *I had arranged, however, to renew the attack at daybreak on the 19th. But I learned some time during the night, or early in the morning, that the enemy had abandoned his position.* It afterwards proved that he moved with great rapidity, and, not being encumbered by wagons, was enabled to get his troops across the river before we could do him any serious injury.

M'CLELLAN THINKS MARCHING SIX MILES A DAY THE LIMIT OF HUMAN ENDURANCE.

I think that, taking into consideration what the troops had gone through, we got *as much out of them in this Antietam campaign as human endurance could bear.*

By Mr. Odell:

Q. What was your force at Antietam?

A. I think that, before those two divisions I alluded to came up, our force was about 90,000 men—not far from that; it may have been 93,000 or 94,000. There were by no means that many engaged in the battle.

Q. How many had you engaged in the battle?

A. My recollection is that the estimate that we formed shortly after was that we had from 70,000 to 75,000 men engaged. I am deducting the camp guards, &c. I think we must have had from 70,000 to 75,000 men engaged.

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. At what number did you estimate the force of the enemy?

A. I think our estimate at the time, and which was pretty well borne out by what occurred, was, that we fought pretty close upon 100,000 men. They were everywhere in strong force.

Q. We have to close our testimony as soon as possible, as it must be written out and the reports made to-morrow (Congress had not then extended the time of the committee as it did afterwards), and we have not time to ask more questions. Is there anything further that you wish to add to your testimony?

A. No sir; I do not now think of anything.

MAJ.-GEN. BURNSIDE'S TESTIMONY.

The following is the whole of Gen. Burnside's testimony relating to the army of the Potomac.

WASHINGTON, *March 19, 1863.*

Major General A. E. BURNSIDE recalled and examined.—[See "Burnside Expedition."]

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. Will you give the committee a concise statement of what was done by you and your command from the time you landed at Fort Monroe until you took command of the army of the Potomac?

CONSULTATIONS ON THE PENINSULA.

A. I landed at Fort Monroe with 7,000 troops from North Carolina. There I was joined by a division from General Hunter, which increased my command to about 11,000 men. I started the troops up the James river; but just as I was leaving the wharf I received a telegram from the Secretary of War, telling me not to go up the James river with the troops until I saw the President, who was on his way down to Old Point. I thereupon sent a vessel after the transports upon which my troops had started, and ordered them back to the harbor. The next morning the President arrived and asked me to go up with him to Harrison's Bar, and at the same time said that he was going to have a consultation there, with a view to ascertaining whether it would not be advisable to remove the army from the peninsula to another line of operations. I asked the President to excuse me from going up, and said that if I went up it was more than likely that my opinion would be asked as to that movement, and that I might be led into giving it; that my mind had been very much occupied with matters connected with another department, and not having served on the peninsula at all, I was not prepared to give an opinion upon a matter of so much importance; that I then knew nothing, and in so short a time could not learn anything, of the condition of the army of the Potomac, or of its ability to make a forward movement against Richmond; and therefore I was not capable of giving an opinion upon the subject. I said that he (the President) already knew the necessity of the army being nearer to Washington, and my opinion would be of no value on the subject. The President at once excused me. On the return of the President he told me that nothing had been decided upon, and would not be until General Halleck had reached Washington, where he was expected daily, as the President had either actually called him or determined to call him there. I was then summoned to Washington, where I met General Halleck, and was asked by him to go to Harrison's Landing with him, which I did. We arrived there in the afternoon, and on that evening all the commanders of corps, with some other general officers, were summoned to appear at General McClellan's head-quarters with a view to consulting with General Halleck. After the general officers had arrived, General Halleck told General McClellan that he (General Halleck) did not desire to consult with them, but wanted to talk with General McClellan after he (General McClellan) had had full consultation with his corps com-

manders. During that night an informal council was held in the tent next to that of General McClellan, and the subject of the removal of the army was fully discussed. All the general officers present who expressed an opinion, except General Sumner, General Heintzelman, and myself, were favorable to removing the army from the peninsula. There were probably eight general officers there, corps commanders and all, who took part at intervals in the consultation. Besides the three named who opposed the withdrawal, those who took more or less part in the conversation were Generals Keyes, Franklin, Fitz-John Porter, Newton, and one or two others whom I do not now remember. I think that General Porter did not express any decided opinion; but General Keyes, Franklin, and Newton were very decidedly in favor of a withdrawal. General McClellan was in the tent at intervals during the discussion. After the general officers left, he stated to me that he had determined to make a move upon Richmond if re-inforcements to the amount of 20,000 men were sent to him. Taking into calculation the amount of force I already had at Fort Monroe, together with other forces that I thought General Halleck would give him, I supposed the movement was to be made, and I accordingly expected to go at once with my force to join General McClellan. On the following morning General McClellan, General Sumner, and myself, went on board the boat where General Halleck was, and I understood that General Halleck told General McClellan that he could have the 20,000 men re-inforcements, and General Halleck, General Meigs, and myself, left for Fort Monroe with that understanding.

Q. What did you understand, while at Harrison's Landing, from officers and men there, in relation to the condition and efficiency of the army there; and what opinions were expressed by the principal officers on that point?

A. I understood from officers that the condition of the army was not good; that sickness was increasing; that many of the regiments were without shelter or cooking utensils, and many of the men were without arms. The general opinion expressed by the leading officers was that the men had become very much enervated. And one leading officer expressed the opinion that the men of his command could not march three miles and fight a battle.

Q. Was not that assigned by those who ordered the withdrawal of the army as one of the principal reasons why it should be withdrawn from the peninsula?

A. It was. On arriving at Fort Monroe, on our return from Harrison's Landing, General Halleck asked me to accompany him to Washington, to get my instructions about taking up the re-inforcements to General McClellan. I accompanied him to Washington, and the next morning went to him for my instructions. He then told me that he had received a message from General McClellan, which made it necessary to change the plan which had been decided upon, and that I must wait for further instructions. Within a few days I received orders to move my whole command to Aquia creek, and from there to Fredericksburg,

to relieve General King, who was then in command at Fredericksburg.

THE VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN.

As soon as I arrived at Fredericksburg, General King proceeded to join General McDowell's corps, to which he belonged, and which was then on the upper Rappahannock with General Pope. Soon after that I received instructions to send all the assistance possible to General Pope, and I at once ordered General Reno and General Stevens, with their divisions, to go up the Rappahannock and report to General Pope, keeping General Parke at Fredericksburg.

Shortly after that, the advance of the army of the Potomac reached Aquia creek, and I was engaged from that time, until I was ordered away from there, in forwarding troops, supplies, &c., to General Pope. As soon as it was understood that General Pope was retreating towards Washington I was ordered, by General Halleck, to evacuate Fredericksburg and Aquia, and move with my whole force to Washington, bringing away with me all the public property I possibly could, and destroying whatever had to be left behind. After making all my preparations for moving, and getting off all the stores I could, I destroyed the bridges over the Rappahannock, and moved with my whole force to Aquia creek, where I embarked my troops for Washington, taking with me the wagons, teams, locomotives, &c. Some thirty cars, which we were not able to transport, were burned to keep them from falling into the hands of the enemy. On my arrival at Aquia creek General McClellan sent me an order to report to him in Washington as soon as possible.

Q. Why were the wharves and buildings at Aquia creek destroyed?

A. All the troops, batteries, and cavalry at Aquia creek had been removed, except one regiment which had been left as a rear-guard, and all the engines and the greater portion of the wagons had been removed before I left. I left instructions with Colonel Welsh, who was then in command, to remain where he was until I telegraphed him to come to Washington, and then to embark as much of the remaining property as possible, destroying all that he had to leave behind. This was in accordance with my instructions to bring away all I could and to destroy the remainder. On arriving in Washington I had a conversation with General Meigs on the subject of the destruction of the buildings and wharves at Aquia. He expressed a very decided opinion that it should not be done. I went to General Halleck and told him of this conversation, and he himself said that nothing ought to be destroyed except the movable property and the cars. I then told him that I would instruct Colonel Welsh at once not to destroy the wharves and buildings. I went to the telegraph office and wrote a telegram to that effect. It appears, however, that that telegram never reached Colonel Welsh, owing to some derangement of the lines, or, as I now remember, in consequence of the operators becoming frightened and leaving the office before the place was in effect evacuated. I reported to General McClellan in Washington, and, after some two or three days, I received orders from him to take command of the right wing of the army, composed of the first and ninth army corps, then commanded by General Hooker and General Reno. I received instructions to move in

the direction of Frederick city, by way of Lees-borough, Mechanicsville, and Damascus.

THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN.

I accordingly started out and reached the crossing of the Monocacy on the afternoon of the 12th of September. After a slight skirmish my command entered Frederick city. I was then ordered by General McClellan to move through Middletown in the direction of Boonsborough. General Reno's corps moved on to Middletown, and I ordered General Hooker's corps to start early the next morning—the 14th. On the morning of the 14th General Reno's corps moved through Middletown, and his advance encountered the enemy at Turner's Gap of South mountain. That corps had been preceded by Pleasonton's cavalry, which had reconnoitered the ground and reported to General Cox; who was in advance, the position of the enemy. I ordered General Reno's corps to move up to the left of the main pike from Middletown to Sharpsburg, and to drive the enemy from the heights on the left of the gap. About half-past one o'clock in the day, the head of General Hooker's column arriving, I ordered him to move to the right, in the direction of the old Hagerstown road, with a view to seizing the heights on the right of the main pike. Both these generals accomplished their work successfully and most completely, and sundown found us in possession of the heights. General Reno's corps had considerable skirmishing with the enemy in advance of the crest after nightfall. And General Gibbon's brigade, which I had detached from General Hooker's corps, and ordered up the main pike, had a very brilliant fight after nightfall, on the main pike just this side of the Mountain House. My command rested upon their arms on the crest of the mountain during that night, and very early the next morning our skirmishers discovered that the enemy had retreated from that neighborhood. General Hooker was temporarily detached from my command by an order from general headquarters, and I was left with but one corps, then commanded by General Cox, General Reno having been killed in the action of the evening before. I was ordered with the remainder of my command to move down in pursuit of the enemy over the old Sharpsburg road. We encountered nothing until I reached the neighborhood of Antietam creek, where the whole of our army, with the exception of Franklin's corps, was concentrated under the immediate command of General McClellan. At night I was ordered to take my position on the extreme left of the line, immediately opposite the lower Antietam Bridge, my left resting on the mountain where the Rohrersville and Sharpsburg road crossed. On the morning of the 16th we corrected our positions, which had been taken with some irregularity, in consequence of the movements having been performed in the night. We remained so until the afternoon, when, by direction of General McClellan, we moved our batteries on to the heights overlooking the lower Antietam Bridge, and the infantry to their support in the rear.

THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM.

On the morning of the 17th I was ordered to place the command in position to enable us to attack the enemy at the bridge as soon as I was notified to commence the attack. Portions of the force were immediately placed near the

bridge and the fords—one above and one below the bridge. About 10 o'clock I received an order from General McClellan to make the attack on the bridge, and accordingly directed General Crook's brigade of Cox's division to make a direct attack upon the bridge, and supported him by the divisions of General Sturgis and General Wilcox. I ordered General Rodman to endeavor to effect a crossing at the ford below with his division, supported by Colonel Scammon's brigade of General Cox's division. General Crook soon discovered from his position that it would be impossible for him to carry the bridge, and so reported. I then ordered General Sturgis to carry it with his division. He ordered one of his brigades to make the attack, but after two very gallant assaults they were driven back. I then ordered General Sturgis to put in another brigade, which brigade carried the bridge at once by assault. At about the same time General Rodman carried the ford below, and General Crook succeeded in finding a crossing place above the bridge. The bridge was carried about half-past 1 o'clock. Before 4 o'clock the whole command had crossed with the batteries, and taken position on the heights or knolls just above the bridge. This whole movement, even after the bridge was carried, had to be performed under a very heavy artillery fire from the enemy. Soon after the command was formed there, I received instructions to make an attack upon the high ground surrounding the town of Sharpsburg. General Sturgis's division, having exhausted the greater portion of its ammunition in carrying the bridge, was placed in reserve. And I directed General Cox to move forward his old division, with the divisions of General Wilcox and General Rodman; General Wilcox's division being on the extreme right, General Rodman's on the extreme left; and General Cox's division acting as a support to those two. The attacks were made, and the heights, which would enable us to hold the town of Sharpsburg, were carried. But by this time the enemy had brought away from opposite the extreme right of our army portions of their forces, and concentrated them against us. And at the same time the light division of A. P. Hill, which had come up from Harper's Ferry, came up opposite our extreme left and forced it to fall back. I at once ordered General Sturgis's division, though nearly out of ammunition, up to its support, and they held their position until night-fall. In the meantime I had sent to General McClellan for reinforcements, but received a message from him that he could not give me any, at the same directing me to hold the bridge at all hazards. The troops accordingly fell back to the first position they had occupied after crossing the bridge, our skirmishers being well up to our advanced position. That position was held by us during the night and the whole of the next day, the 18th. On the night of the 18th, my advanced line was relieved by General Morell's division, and the men were enabled to cook some provisions and make some coffee, which they had not done since we left Middletown. On the morning of the 19th we were ordered, in pursuit of the enemy, towards the bridge at the crossing of the Antietam near its mouth. We soon discovered that the enemy had crossed the river. We then went into camp near the Antietam foundry, and remained there for some six or eight days. Then

we were moved to our encampment in Pleasant Valley, where we remained until we were ordered by General McClellan to cross the Potomac at Berlin, the 9th corps being the advance of the army. I was at that time placed in command of General Stoneman's and General Whipple's divisions, in addition to the 9th corps. I have omitted to mention that General Cox's division was ordered to Western Virginia from our encampment in Pleasant Valley, and General Wilcox from that time commanded the 9th corps. After crossing the Potomac at Berlin, we went to Lovettsville, where we remained one day. We then moved to Purcellville, then to the neighborhood of Union, then to the neighborhood of Piedmont and Salem, and then to the neighborhood of Waterloo Bridge, where I was with my entire command, when I was ordered to take command of the army of the Potomac.

THE RESERVES.

Q. How many men were in reserve at the battle of Antietam, not engaged in the battle?

A. We understand that night that *none of General Porter's corps had been engaged, except as skirmishers—perhaps 15,000 to 20,000 men.*

WHY THE ATTACK WAS NOT RENEWED.

Q. Why was not the battle renewed on the 18th, and why were the enemy permitted to escape across the river?

A. I was told at General McClellan's headquarters that our right had been so badly broken that they could not be got together for an attack, and they would have to wait for re-enforcements; and that General Sumner advised General McClellan not to renew the attack, because of the condition of his corps; and it was also stated that very little of General Hooker's corps was left.

Q. What was the condition of your command? could they have engaged the enemy the next day?

A. I have no doubt they could. My own command was in good condition, holding its position on the opposite side of Antietam. One of the brigades of General Rodman's division had been pretty severely handled after General Rodman's death. But I saw that brigade the next morning, and considered it in fighting condition. The rest of my troops held all their ground the next day, keeping up a continual skirmishing.

BURNSIDE'S OPINION.

Q. What was your own opinion at that time in relation to renewing the attack?

A. I was of the impression, the night after the battle, that the attack ought to be renewed the next morning; but having positive knowledge in relation only to my own command, my opinion was only valuable as that of the commander of that part of our line.

Q. Did you express an opinion to General McClellan, or to any of his staff, in relation to renewing the battle the next day; if so, what was that opinion?

A. I did express an opinion to General McClellan on the subject. After my command was all in position—say 8½ o'clock at night—I went over to General McClellan's headquarters at Cadysville, and expressed the opinion to General Marcy, his chief of staff, that the attack ought to be renewed the next morning at 5 o'clock. I also expressed the same opinion to some of the

other members of General McClellan's staff. General Marcy told me that I ought to see General McClellan, and tell him what I thought of the matter. I went to General McClellan's tent, and in the course of conversation I expressed the same opinion to him; and told him that if I could have 5,000 fresh troops to pass in advance of my line, I would be willing to commence the attack on the next morning. He said that he had been thinking the matter over, and would make up his mind during the night, and if I would send a staff officer to his headquarters to remain there over night, he would send me orders early in the morning; and if he concluded to renew the attack, he would send me the necessary men. I did send the staff officer over, but General McClellan concluded not to renew the attack the next day.

Q. Would there have been any difficulty in furnishing the 5,000 fresh troops which you desired, as the corps of Fitz-John Porter, some 15,000 or 20,000 men, had not been engaged?

A. *There would have been no difficulty in furnishing 5,000 fresh troops.* In fact, General McClellan did send Morell's division, of quite that strength, to report to me, but *not with orders to me to renew the attack.*

THE LONG DELAY.

Q. Was there anything in the condition of the army which made necessary the long delay after the battle of Antietam?

A. *So far as my own command was concerned there was not.* It was ready to march within a few days after the battle. But I heard other corps commanders report to General McClellan, after he received an important order from the President of the United States, that their corps were not ready to move.

Q. Who were those corps commanders?

A. *General Fitz-John Porter, General Franklin, and General Reynolds.*

Q. Do you know whether or not an order was given from the President to General McClellan to put the army in motion?

A. General McClellan showed me a telegraphic dispatch, either from the President or from General Halleck, just previous to this consultation of which I have spoken, ordering him to cross the river and attack the enemy.

Q. Was it not of the utmost importance that the time should be improved if we were to accomplish anything during the fall?

A. *There is no doubt that it was of the greatest military importance that the army should do all the work possible before the winter set in.*

WASHINGTON, December 19, 1862.

Major General AMBROSE E. BURNSIDE, sworn and examined.

By the Chairman:

Q. You have seen the resolution of the Senate under which this committee is now acting. Will you now go on, and, in your own way, without questioning, give such an account of the matters embraced in that resolution as you may consider necessary and proper? We do not want to go back to the time when you came into command.

A. In order that the whole matter may be entirely understood, it may be well to go back a little.

Q. Very well. Make your statement in your own way.

A. When, after the battle of Antietam, Gen. McClellan decided to cross the Potomac, I said to him that, in my opinion, he would never be able to take this army on that route beyond the Rappahannock, unless he succeeded in fighting the enemy at some place on this side; that if he proposed to go to Richmond by land, he would have to go by way of Fredericksburg; and in that he partially agreed with me. After we had started we had another conversation on that subject, and several other officers were present. On the 6th of November, after this conversation, General McClellan gave an order to Captain Duane, his chief engineer, to have all the pontoon bridges at Berlin and in that neighborhood that could be spared taken up and sent down to Washington, with a view of getting them down to this line, in case he decided to go by way of Fredericksburg. The letter conveying that order was written on the 6th of November, but, as I understand, was not received until the 12th of November.

BURNSIDE TAKES COMMAND.

On the 7th or 8th of November I received an order from the President of the United States directing me to take command of the Army of the Potomac, and also a copy of the order relieving General McClellan from that command. This order was conveyed to me by General Buckingham, who was attached to the War Department. After getting over my surprise, the shock, &c., I told General Buckingham that it was a matter that required very serious thought; that I did not want the command; that it had been offered to me twice before, and I did not feel that I could take it. I consulted with two of my staff-officers in regard to it for, I should think, an hour and a half. They urged upon me that I had no right, as a soldier, to disobey the order, and that I had already expressed to the government my unwillingness to take the command. I told them what my views were with reference to my ability to exercise such a command, which views were those I had always unreservedly expressed—that I was not competent to command such a large army as this. I had said the same over and over again to the President and Secretary of War, and also that, if matters could be satisfactorily arranged with Gen. McClellan, I thought he could command the Army of the Potomac better than any other general in it. But they had studied the subject more than I had, and knew more about their objections to General McClellan than I did.

There had been some conversation in regard to the removal of General McClellan when he was bringing away his army from before Richmond. The first of these conversations with the President and Secretary of War occurred at that time. And then, after General McClellan had got back to Washington, and before the commencement of the Maryland campaign, there was another conversation of the same kind. And on both of those occasions I expressed to the President the opinion that I did not think there was any one who could do as much with that army as General McClellan could, if matters could be so arranged as to remove their objections to him.

After I had consulted with my staff-officers, I went to see General McClellan himself, and he agreed with them that this was an order which I, as a soldier, had to obey. He said that he could not retain the command, for he, as a soldier, would have to obey the order directing him to give up that command.

I then assumed the command, in the midst of a violent snow-storm, with the army in a position that I knew but little of. I had previously commanded but one corps, upon the extreme right, and I had been upon the extreme right and in the advance since that campaign had begun. I probably knew less than any other corps commander of the positions and relative strength of the several corps of the army. Gen. McClellan remained some two or three days to arrange his affairs, and came with me as far as Warrenton, and then left, having given me all the information he could in reference to the army.

BURNSIDE'S PLAN.

General Halleck came down to see me on the 11th of November. On the 9th I made out a plan of operations, in accordance with the order of General Halleck, which directed me not only to take command of the army, but also to state what I proposed to do with it. That plan I wrote out on the morning of the 9th of November, and sent it by a special messenger to Washington. I can furnish the committee a copy of that plan if they desire it. I do not have it here now.

Q. State the substance of it, if you please; that may do as well.

A. I stated, in substance, that I thought it advisable to concentrate the army in the neighborhood of Warrenton; to make a small movement across the Rappahannock, as a feint, with a view to divert the attention of the enemy and lead them to believe that we were going to move in the direction of Gordonsville, and then to make a rapid movement of the whole army to Fredericksburg on this side of the Rappahannock.

As my reasons for that, I stated that the further we got into the interior of Virginia the longer would be our line of communications, and the greater would be the difficulty we would have in keeping them open, as the enemy had upon our right flank a corps which at almost any time could, by a rapid movement, seriously embarrass us. If we were caught by the elements so far from our base of supplies, and at the same time in the enemy's country, where they had means of getting information that we had not, it might, I thought, prove disastrous to the army, as we had but one line of railway by which to supply it.

In moving upon Fredericksburg we would all the time be as near Washington as would the enemy; and after arriving at Fredericksburg we would be at a point nearer to Richmond than we would be even if we should take Gordonsville. On the Gordonsville line, the enemy, in my opinion, would not give us a decisive battle at any place this side of Richmond. They would defend Gordonsville until such time as they felt they had given us a check, and then, with so many lines of railroad open to them, they would move upon Richmond or upon Lynchburg, and, in either case, the difficulty of following them would be very great.

In connection with this movement, I requested that barges filled with provisions and forage should be floated to Aquia creek, where they could easily be landed; that materials be collected for the reconstruction of the wharves there, and that all the wagons in Washington that could be possibly spared should be filled with hard bread and small commissary stores, and, with a large number of beef-cattle, started down to Fredericksburg, on the road by way of Dumfries; and that this wagon train and herd of cattle should be preceded by a pontoon train large enough to span the Rappahannock twice. I stated that this wagon train could move in perfect safety, because it would be all the time between our army and the Potomac, or, in other words, our army would be all the time between the enemy and that train. But at the same time I said that if a cavalry escort could not be furnished from Washington, I would send some of my cavalry to guard the train.

THE PONTOONS.

On the morning of the 14th of November, feeling uneasy with reference to the pontoons, as I had not heard of their starting, I directed my chief engineer to telegraph again in reference to them.

Q. To whom did he telegraph?

A. He telegraphed to General Woodbury or to Major Spaulding. It subsequently appeared that that was the first they ever had heard of my wish to have the pontoon train started down for Fredericksburg, although the authorities in Washington had had my plan sent to them on the 9th of November, and it had also been discussed by General Halleck and General Meigs, at my headquarters at Warrenton, on the night of the 11th or 12th of November; and, after discussing it fully there, they sat down and sent telegrams to Washington, which, as I supposed, fully covered the case, and would secure the starting of the pontoons at once. I supposed, of course, that those portions of the plan which required to be attended to in Washington would be carried out there at once. I could have sent officers of my own there to attend to those matters, and perhaps I made a mistake in not doing so, as General Halleck afterwards told me that I ought not to have trusted to them in Washington for the details. In reply to the telegram I had ordered to be sent, General Woodbury telegraphed back that the pontoons would start on Sunday morning, possibly, and certainly on Monday morning, which would have been on the 16th or 17th of November, and would have been in time. They did not, however, start until the 19th, and on that day it commenced raining, which delayed them so much, and the roads became so bad, that when they got to Dumfries, they floated the pontoons off the wagons; sent to Washington for a steamer, and carried them down to Aquia creek by water, sending the wagons around by land. The pontoons did not get here until the 22d or the 23d of November.

THE MARCH.

On the 16th of November I started the column down the road to Fredericksburg, not knowing anything about the delay in the starting of the pontoons, because the telegram announcing the delay did not reach Warrenton Junction until I had left to come down here with the troops, and that telegram did not reach me until I arrived here, on the morning of the 19th, when it was handed to me by an orderly, who had brought it down from Warrenton Junction.

THE ARRIVAL.

After reaching here, I saw at once that there was no chance for crossing the Rappahannock with the army at that time. It commenced raining, and the river began to rise, not to any great extent, but I did not know how much it might rise. There were no means of crossing, except by going up to the fords, and it would be impossible to do that, because of the inability to supply the troops after they should cross.

General Sumner, with his command, arrived here in advance. He sent to me, asking if he should cross the river. He was very much tempted to take his own corps across to Fredericksburg by a ford near Falmouth, as there was no enemy there, except a very small force. I did not think it advisable that he should cross at that time.

The plan I had in contemplation was, if the stores and those bridges had come here as I had expected, to throw Sumner's whole corps across the Rappahannock, fill the wagons with as many small stores as we could, and having beef-cattle along for meats, then to make a rapid movement down in the direction of Richmond, and try to meet the

enemy and fight a battle before Jackson could make a junction there. We knew that Jackson was in the valley, and felt that there was force enough on the Upper Rappahannock to take care of him. We felt certain that as soon as the enemy knew of our coming down here, the force under Jackson would be recalled, and we wanted to meet this force and beat it before Jackson could make a junction with them, or before Jackson could come down on our flank and perhaps cripple us. I had recommended that more supplies should be sent to the mouth of the Rappahannock, with a view to establishing a depot at Port Royal after we had advanced to Fredericksburg.

After the first delay in starting the pontoons, I think they were sent as quickly as they could have been, and the supplies and quartermaster's stores have been always in as great abundance as we could have expected; for after the 19th of November the weather and the roads were particularly bad. Horses and mules, &c., were sent down to us, so that our cavalry and teams were in very good condition.

PLANS FOR CROSSING.

After it was ascertained that there must be a delay, and that the enemy had concentrated in such force as to make it very difficult to cross, except by a number of bridges, we commenced bringing up from Aquia creek all the pontoons we could. After enough of them had been brought up to build the bridges, I called several councils of war to decide about crossing the Rappahannock. It was first decided to cross down at Skinker's Neck, about twelve miles below here. But our demonstration in that direction concentrated the enemy at that place, and I finally gave up the idea of crossing there. I still continued operations at Skinker's Neck by way of demonstration, simply for the purpose of drawing down there as large a force of the enemy as possible. I then decided to cross here, because, in the first place, I felt satisfied that they did not expect us to cross here, but down below; in the next place, I felt satisfied that this was the place to fight the most decisive battle, because if we could divide their forces by piercing their lines at one or two points, separating their left from their right, then a vigorous attack with the whole army would succeed in breaking their army in pieces.

The enemy had cut a road along in the rear of the line of heights where we made our attack, by means of which they connected the two wings of their army, and avoided a long detour around through a bad country. I obtained from a colored man from the other side of the town information in regard to this new road, which proved to be correct. I wanted to obtain possession of that new road, and that was my reason for making an attack on the extreme left. I did not intend to make the attack on the right until that position had been taken, which I supposed would stagger the enemy, cutting their line in two; and then I proposed to make a direct attack on their front, and drive them out of their works.

THE BATTLE.

I succeeded in building six bridges, and taking the whole army across. The two attacks were made, and we were repulsed; still holding a portion of the ground we had fought upon, but not our extreme advance.

That night I went all over the field on our right; in fact, I was with the officers and men until nearly daylight. I found the feeling to be rather against an attack the next morning; in fact, it was decidedly against it.

I returned to my headquarters, and, after conversation with General Sumner, told him that I wanted him to order the ninth army corps—which was the corps I originally commanded—to form the next morning a column of attack by regiments. It consisted of some eighteen old regiments, and some new ones, and I desired the column to make a direct attack upon the enemy's works. I thought that these regiments, by coming quickly up after each other, would be able to carry the stone wall and the batteries in front, forcing the enemy into their next line, and by going in with them they would not be able to fire upon us to any great extent. I left General Sumner with that understanding, and directed him to give the order. The order was given, and the column of attack was formed.

The next morning, just before the column was to have started, General Sumner came to me and said: "General, I hope you will desist from this attack; I do not know of any general officer who approves of it, and I think it will prove disastrous to the army." Advice of that kind from General Sumner, who has always been in favor of an advance whenever it was possible, caused me to hesitate. I kept the column of attack formed, and sent over for the division and corps commanders, and consulted with them. They unanimously voted against the attack. I then went over to see the other officers of the command on the other side, and found that the same impression prevailed among them. I then sent for General Franklin, who was on the left, and he was of exactly the same opinion. This caused me to decide that I ought not to make the attack I had contemplated. And besides, inasmuch as the President of the United States had told me not to be in haste in making this attack; that

he would give me all the support that he could, but he did not want the army of the Potomac destroyed, I felt that I could not take the responsibility of ordering the attack, notwithstanding my own belief at the time that the works of the enemy could be carried.

THE RETREAT.

In the afternoon of that day I again saw the officers, and told them that I had decided to withdraw to this side of the river all our forces except enough to hold the town and the bridge-heads, but should keep the bridges there for further operations in case we wanted to cross again. I accordingly ordered the withdrawal, leaving General Hooker to conduct the withdrawal of our forces from the town, and General Franklin to conduct it on our left.

During that evening I received a note from General Hooker; and about 10 o'clock at night General Butterfield came over with a message from General Hooker, stating that he (General Hooker) felt it his duty to represent to me the condition in which I was leaving the town and the troops in it. After a long conversation on the subject with General Butterfield, I felt that the troops I proposed to leave behind would not be able to hold the town. I then partially decided to withdraw the whole command, which was a still more perilous operation. It commenced raining, which, to some extent, was an assistance to us, but a very bad thing in the moving of troops. I thought over the matter for about two hours; and about 1 o'clock I sent over an order to withdraw the whole force, which was successfully accomplished.

There had been a great deal of division of opinion among the corps commanders as to the place of crossing. But, after all the discussion upon the subject, the decision to cross over here I understood was well received by all of them.

HOOKE'S PLAN.

While on his way here General Hooker, on the morning of the 20th of November, wrote me a note, which I received on the 21st, in which he suggested that he should cross his force over the Rappahannock at the ford nearest to him (Richard's Ford), and move rapidly down to Saxton's Station and take position there. He stated that he had three days' provisions, and thought he could beat any force of the enemy in front of him. I replied to him that I was always very glad to take the advice of my general officers, and should always be loth to make a move without consulting them; but I could not approve of the move he had suggested, because, in the first place, he would have to march some thirty-six miles to get to Saxton's Station; it was then raining, and he would have to ford two rivers, which might rise and cut him off from the main body of the command, and as I had no means of crossing at Fredericksburg I would be prevented from sending him supplies and assistance; and, although he might reach Saxton's Station, and beat any force of the enemy he might meet at that time, yet it would be a very hazardous movement to throw a column like that beyond the reach of its proper support. This reply I sent to General Hooker by an aide-de-camp. He thanked me; said he had only made it as a suggestion, and the weather, as it was then raining, of course rendered it impossible to make the movement he had suggested.

CAUSES OF FAILURE.

Q. What causes do you assign for the failure of your attack here?

A. It was found to be impossible to get the men up to the works. The enemy's fire was too hot for them. The whole command fought most gallantly. The enemy themselves say they never saw our men fight so hard as on that day.

Q. Were the enemy's works very strong?

A. Their works are not strong works, but they occupy very strong positions. It is possible that the points of attack were wrongly ordered; if such is the case, I can only say that I did to the best of my ability. It is also possible that we would have done better to have crossed at Skinker's Neck. But, for what I supposed to be good reasons, I felt we had better cross here; that we would have a more decisive engagement here, and that, if we succeeded in defeating the enemy here, we could break up the whole of their army here, which, I think, is now the most desirable thing, not even second to the taking of Richmond; for if this army was broken up, though they might defend Richmond for a while, they could not make a very protracted defense there.

THE PONTOONS AGAIN.

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. Do I understand you to say that it was your understanding that General Halleck and General Meigs, while at your headquarters in Warrenton, and before you commenced the movement of your army, sent orders to Washington for the pontoons to be immediately forwarded to Falmouth?

A. That was my understanding, certainly.

Q. In your judgment, could the pontoons have been forwarded in time for you to have crossed the Rappahan-

rock when you expected, if all possible efforts had been made by those who were charged with that duty?

A. Yes, sir; if they had received their orders in time.

Q. Did the non-arrival of the pontoons at the time you expected prevent your crossing when you expected to cross, and interfere with the success of your plan?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Since you have assumed the command of the army of the Potomac, have all its movements been made by you according to your own judgment, or have some of them been directed by the General-in-Chief, the Secretary of War, or the President of the United States?

A. They have all been made in accordance with my own judgment. In some cases I have submitted my views, which have been approved.

Q. Who did you understand was responsible for the forwarding of the pontoons to Falmouth?

A. I understood that General Halleck was to give the necessary orders, and then the officers who should receive those orders were the ones responsible for the pontoons coming here. I could have carried out that part of the plan through officers of my own. But having just taken the command of an army with which I was but little acquainted, it was evident that it was as much as I could attend to, with the assistance of all my officers, to change its position from Warrenton to Fredericksburg. And I felt, indeed I expected, that all the parts of the plan which were to be executed in Washington would be attended to by the officers at that place, under the direction of the different departments to which those parts of the plan appertained.

Q. Did you or not understand that you yourself were to be responsible for seeing that those orders were carried out?

A. I did not. I never imagined for a moment that I had to carry out anything that required to be done in Washington. General Meigs told me distinctly several days ago, in Washington, that he never saw my plan of operations until I showed it to him on that day.

FRANKLIN'S FAILURE.

Q. Do I understand you to say in your statement that you expected General Franklin to carry the point at the extreme left of the ridge in rear of the town, and thereby enable our troops to storm and carry their fortifications?

A. I did expect him to carry that point, which, being done, would have placed our forces in rear of their extreme left, and which I thought at the time would shake their forces on the ridge to such an extent that the position in front could be easily stormed and carried.

Q. To what do you attribute his failure to accomplish that?

A. To the great strength of the position and the accumulation of the enemy's forces there. I expected the bridges would be built in two or three hours after they were unloaded, which was about daylight. Instead of that, those on the right were not built until three o'clock in the afternoon, and I had only the means of getting across one division over the bridges on the right. General Franklin's bridges were built about noon, and were held by our troops on the opposite bank. This gave the enemy time to accumulate their forces, which were stretched along the river from Port Royal up to the battle-field, before I was able to order the attack. Whilst the men here were unloading the bridges and putting them into the water, the enemy's sharpshooters opened a very heavy fire from the town, and our batteries opened upon the town with the view of silencing them. In this manner the bridges were built about two-thirds of their length, at which time the bridge-builders were driven off, and had to take shelter under the bank. Repeated efforts were made to get these bridge-builders out to the end of the bridges with the necessary material, but they all failed. It was then reported to me that it was impossible to build the bridges under that fire, and that the sharpshooters could not be driven out of town by the artillery. We had one hundred and forty-three guns in position, the larger portion of which were playing upon the town. I said to the officers who had reported to me that it was impossible to build the bridges, that they must be built, and that some plan must be devised for getting these sharpshooters out of the way, so that our men could get to work. Upon consulting with General Hunt, chief of artillery, and General Woodbury, of the engineers, it was agreed to fill the boats with our own men, run them quickly across under fire, throw them on the bank, and let them go up into the streets and houses and drive the sharpshooters away. This plan was successfully carried out, and, in fifteen minutes after the first detachment of troops had reached the opposite bank our men began building the bridges, and in half an hour more they were completed.

CONDUCT AND NUMBERS OF THE TROOPS.

Q. What was the conduct of the Officers and men during the attack?

A. With the exception of a single regiment it was excellent.

Q. Will you state, as nearly as you can, the whole number of our troops that were engaged?

A. We had about one hundred thousand men on the other side of the river.

Q. What part of that number were actually engaged in battle?

A. Every single man of them was under artillery fire, and about half of them were at different times formed in columns of attack. Every man was put in column of attack that could be got in.

Q. Have you any knowledge as to the force of the enemy here?

A. It is estimated at all the way from one hundred thousand to two hundred thousand. I think myself it was less than one hundred thousand.

Q. What was the extent of the casualties on our side resulting from all the fighting?

A. It will not be far from ten thousand men—killed, wounded, and missing.

Q. What is the present condition of our troops here?

A. As far as my knowledge and information goes it is good.

Q. Do you or not consider your troops demoralized, or the efficiency of your army impaired, except so far as it has been from the loss of so many men?

A. I do not. I would add here that, although at the time I ordered the column of attack to be formed on the morning after the battle, I thought the enemy's works would be carried, and adhered to that opinion during that day, I afterwards became convinced that that could not have been done, owing to the great strength of the enemy, the time given them for re-enforcing, and the belief also of our officers that it could not be done. I accordingly telegraphed to the President of the United States that I withdrew our army because I felt that the enemy's position could not be carried.

AFTER FREDERICKSBURG.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
January 26, 1863.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, of Massachusetts.

Resolved, That the committee on the conduct of the war be instructed to inquire whether Major-General A. E. Burnside has, since the battle of Fredericksburg, formed any plans for the movement of the army of the Potomac, or any portion of the same; and, if so, whether any subordinate generals of said army have written to or visited Washington to oppose or interfere with the execution of such movements; and whether such proposed movements have been arrested or interfered with; and, if so, by what authority.

Attest:

J. W. FORNEY, *Secretary*.

WASHINGTON, February 7, 1863.

Major-General A. E. BURNSIDE sworn and examined.

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. You have read the resolution of the Senate under which this committee is now acting. Will you give us a concise history of your administration of the army of the Potomac, from the time of the Fredericksburg battle down to the time when you relinquished the command, embracing within your statement an answer to the points presented in this resolution?

BURNSIDE'S NEW PLAN.

A. Soon after I met your committee at my camp, I commenced making arrangements for another movement, by sending out reconnoitering parties, by preparing roads, &c. All my papers are on board a schooner which started from Aquia creek for New York city, and which has not yet arrived. I therefore may not give the exact dates in my present statement, but they will not vary more than a day or two from the correct dates. On the 26th of December I ordered the entire command to prepare three days' cooked rations; to fill their wagons with small stores to the amount of ten days' supply; if possible, to have with them at the same time from ten to twelve days' supply of beef cattle, with forage for teams, and cavalry and artillery horses for about the same length of time, and the required amount of ammunition,—in fact, to be in a condition to move at twelve hours' notice. I had determined to cross the river some six or seven miles below Fredericksburg, at a point opposite the Sedden House, a short distance below Hayfield. The positions for the artillery to protect the crossing had all been selected, the roads surveyed, and the corduroy necessary to prepare the roads had been cut. It was my intention to make a feint above the town, which could have been turned into a positive assault if I found we were discovered below. But if we were not discovered below, it was my intention to throw the entire command across at the point opposite the Sedden House, and points in the neighborhood where bridges could be built.

THE GRAND CAVALRY EXPEDITION.

In connection with this movement I had organized a cavalry expedition, to consist of some two thousand five hundred of the best cavalry in my command; a thousand of them, with four pieces of artillery, to be picked men. And I had detailed a division of infantry from General Hooker's command to accompany this cavalry as far as the upper fords of the Rappahannock, and aid them in crossing. The thousand picked men, with the four pieces of artillery, were to cross the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford; the Rapidan at Raccoon Ford; the Virginia Central railroad at Louisa Court-house; the James River at either Goochland or Carter's; the Richmond and Lynchburg railroad at a point south of there; the Richmond, Petersburg, and Weldon railroad at or near the crossing of the Nottoway; and then to move on through General Pryor's command, and join General Peck at Suffolk, where we were to have steamers in waiting to bring them back to Aquia creek.—at least, the men, with their arms and accoutrements; and, in case their horses had to be left behind, new horses would be supplied to them. *The object of this cavalry expedition was to attract the attention of the enemy, blow up the locks on the James River canal, blow up the iron bridge on the Richmond and Lynchburg railroad at the place of crossing, and destroy the bridge on the Richmond and Weldon railroad over the Nottoway; and, during this movement, I intended to throw my command across the river at the point I have named.* The remainder of the cavalry, other than the thousand picked men, was to break off from the main body in the following order: a portion to go up to Warren's; another portion to go to the neighborhood of Culpepper; another portion was to accompany the thousand picked men as far as Raccoon Ford, from which point they were to turn back. The object of these dispositions was to deceive the enemy as to which one of the columns was the attacking column.

THE PRESIDENT INTERFERES.

This expedition had got under way, and the brigade of infantry had, I think on the 80th of December, crossed at Richard's Ford, and come back over Ellis's Ford, which would have enabled the cavalry to cross at Kelly's Ford. On that day I received from the President of the United States a telegraphic dispatch in, substantially, these words: "I have good reason for saying that you must not make a general movement without letting me know of it." I could not imagine at the time what reasons the President had for sending this telegram, but supposed it related in some way to some important military movements in other parts of the country, in which it was necessary to have co-operation. I at once despatched a messenger to overtake the advance of this cavalry expedition, and order them to halt until further orders; and I simply suspended the order for the general movement. My messenger overtook the cavalry just as they were ready to cross at Kelly's Ford. In the mean time I heard of the raid Stuart had made in the direction of Dumfries, and the rear of Fairfax Court-house, and sent a second order for a portion of this cavalry to endeavor to cut off Stuart in the neighborhood of Warrenton, in which they did not succeed. I then determined to come up to Washington to see the President, and, if possible, to ascertain the exact state of the case.

BURNSIDE AND THE PRESIDENT.

I came up to Washington, saw the President, and he frankly told me that some general officers of my command had called upon him, and represented that I was on the eve of another movement; that the order for the preparation of rations, ammunition, &c., had already been issued, and all the preliminary arrangements made; and that they were satisfied that if the movement was made, it would result in disaster. That was about the substance of what the President told me, although he said a great deal more. I was so much surprised at the time at what I heard, that it did not make an active impression on my mind as to the exact words. But I am sure that was the nature of it; and I think he said that he had understood that no prominent officer of my command had any faith in my proposed movement.

I then sat down and gave the President a detailed account of my plans for this movement, at the same time telling him that I was satisfied there was some misgiving on the part of some of my general officers as to making any movement at all at that time. But I said that I was myself satisfied that that movement ought to be made, and I had come to that conclusion without any consultation with the other generals.

The President still expressed misgivings as to the feasibility of making the entire movement, but expressed some regret at the cavalry portion of it being stopped. I told him that that was a portion of the general movement, and that, if these picked men were to go around Richmond without having any general movement in co-operation with them, and were to meet with disaster and be captured, it would be a very serious loss to us; and even if they were to meet with success, it would not compensate for the risk, unless we were

to take advantage of that success by a general movement; and, besides, if the details of this cavalry movement could be kept quiet—kept secret—it might yet be made, in conjunction with the general movement, as I had proposed.

The President then said that he did not feel willing to authorize a continuous movement without consultation with some of his advisers. He sent for General Halleck and Mr. Stanton, and the matter was very fully talked over. He told them, what they then for the first time heard of, that these officers had called upon him and made these representations to him, resulting in his telegram to me. I asked him if he would give me the names of those officers. He said he could not. I expressed some opinions in reference to what ought to be done with them, but at the same time said that I should not insist upon having the names, as he had a right to withhold them. General Halleck at the same time expressed the opinion that *officers making such representations of that kind should have been dismissed the service at once, or arrested at once, or something of that kind. My view was that they should have been dismissed the service.*

No definite conclusion was come to during that conference in reference to the subject of a movement. I was here at that time for two days.

THE REBELS DISCOVER THE PLAN.

When I returned to my camp I found that many of the details of the general movement were already known, and was told by a general officer that the *details of the cavalry movement were known here in the city of Washington to some sympathizers with the rebellion.* I was told that by General Pleasanton. This was some two or three days after my first interview with the President. Of course, I then abandoned the movement in that distinct form, intending to make it in some other form within a few days.

NOBODY TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY, EXCEPT BURNSIDE.

Some correspondence then passed between the President, General Halleck, and myself, copies of which I have among my papers on board the schooner to which I have already referred; but they can be furnished to the committee, if desired. The amount of the correspondence was a desire on my part to have distinct authority from General Halleck, or from some one else in power here in Washington, to make a move across the river. I stated to them that there was hardly a single general officer occupying a prominent position in my command who would favor a move of that kind, and that the influence of the President's telegram would still rest upon me, even if it had been recalled; and that his caution to me to run no great risk which might result in the defeat and destruction of the army of the Potomac still influenced me, and made me reluctant to make a move of that sort without some encouragement from them. I said that I would take the responsibility of the move myself, for I honestly felt that it ought to be made; but that I did feel that General Halleck ought, at least, to sanction the move. That was the amount of the correspondence on my part.

To these letters I got an answer from General Halleck in general terms, to the effect that I knew very well that he had always favored a forward movement of the army, but that he could not take the responsibility of giving any directions as to when or how it should be made. He then laid down some general military rules that ought to govern an army. That letter was favorably indorsed by the President.

I at once determined to make another move without acknowledging his letter; I accordingly went to work, and the last movement that we made was the result of that work. I made personally a very thorough reconnaissance of the ground above Falmouth, which determined me to make all the necessary preparations for crossing at both Banks's and the United States Fords, and in their neighborhood, with the view of crossing my whole force at those points if found expedient. At the same time I made some further preparations with reference to crossing six or seven miles below, as contemplated in my first proposed movement. All the necessary roads were prepared; the pontoon trains placed in position; the artillery detailed to cover the crossing; in fact, all the necessary arrangements made for this crossing.

There was a delay of some two or three days in consequence of some conflicting intelligence which we received with reference to the position of the enemy, which rendered it necessary for me to send a spy across the river. The man was a resident of that part of the country, who had been driven away by the rebels, and was then employed upon the railroad. He went over and back two nights in succession, and brought me information which determined me to make the crossing above.

I accordingly directed the movement to be made; but the night after the troops started this very severe storm came up, which rendered the roads, as well as the whole face of the country, impassable. The history of that movement the committee must be very well acquainted with already. Before we could get the pontoons and artillery in position the

plan had been discovered by the enemy, which rendered the crossing very precarious, and the movement of artillery on the opposite bank, even if they had been got over, would have been rendered almost impossible, from the state of the roads and the whole face of the country, in consequence of the storm.

[The witness here stated that if he proceeded with his statement, he would be obliged to state some things which, if made public, would do harm, and he did not desire to do anything that would be of injury to the service.

The chairman informed the witness that the committee desired a full and clear statement of everything connected with the subject, but they would not make public anything they should consider calculated to do harm.

The witness then continued.]

THE FEELING IN THE ARMY.

But a very serious objection to attempting the crossing after this occurred was the almost universal feeling among the general officers that the crossing could not be made there. Some of them gave vent to these opinions in a very public manner—even in the presence of my own staff officers, who informed me of the fact.

I telegraphed up to General Halleck that I would be very glad to meet him at Aquia Creek, or, if he wished it, I would run up for an hour to this city. He sent me word by telegraph that I must be my own judge about coming up. I at once telegraphed back: "I shall not come up." I then determined to order the commands back to their original encampments.

ORDER NO. 8.

After doing that, I went to my adjutant-general's office and issued an order, which I termed General Order No. 8. That order dismissed some officers from service, subject to the approval of the President, and relieved others from duty with the army of the Potomac. I also had three sentences of death upon privates for desertion, which I had reviewed and approved, subject, of course, to the approval of the President, as I had no right to do any of these things without that approval. I had sent my own body-guard over into Maryland, and had succeeded in capturing a large number of deserters. I had organized a court-martial, the one which is now in session down there trying some two hundred and fifty deserters.

I told my adjutant-general to issue that order (No. 8) at once. One of my advisers—only two persons knew of this—one of them, who is a very cool, sensible man, and a firm friend, told me that, in his opinion, the order was a just one, and ought to be issued; but he said that he knew my views with reference to endeavoring to make myself useful to the government of the United States, instead of placing myself in opposition to it; that all of these things had to be approved by the President of the United States, at any rate, before they could be put in force; that he did not think I intended to place the President in a position where he either had to assume the responsibility of becoming my enemy before the public, at any rate, thereby enabling a certain portion of my friends to make a martyr of me to some extent; or he had to take the responsibility of carrying out the order, which would be against the views of a great many of the most influential men of the country, particularly that portion of the order in reference to the officers I proposed to have dismissed the service. I told this staff officer that I had no desire to place myself in opposition to the President of the United States in any way; that I thought his (my staff officer's) view of the matter was a correct one; but that I had indicated in that order the only way in which I could command the army of the Potomac. I accordingly took this order, already signed and issued in due form, with the exception of being made public, to the President of the United States, and handed him the order, together with my resignation of my commission as a major general. I told him that he knew my views upon that subject; that I had never sought any command, more particularly that of the army of the Potomac; that my wish was to go into civil life, after it was determined that I could no longer be of use in the army; that I desired no public position of any kind whatever. At the same time I said that I desired not to place myself in opposition to him in any way, or to do anything to weaken the government. I said he could now say to me, "You may take the responsibility of issuing this order, and I will approve it;" and I would take that responsibility, if he would say that it would be sustained after it was issued, because he would have to approve it, for I had no right to dismiss a man or condemn a man to death without his approval. In case that order (No. 8) could not be approved by him, there was my resignation which he could accept, and that would end the matter forever so far as I was concerned; that nothing more would be said in reference to it. I told him he could be sure that my wish was to have that done which was best for the public service, and that was the only way in which I could command the army of the Potomac. The President replied to me, "I think you are right."

* * * But I must consult with some of my advisers about this." I said to him, "if you consult with anybody,

you will not do it, in my opinion." He said, "I cannot help that; I must consult with them." I replied that he was the judge, and I would not question his right to do what he pleased.

The President asked me to remain all that day. I replied that I could not remain away from my command; that he knew my views, and I was fixed and determined in them. He then asked me to come up that night again. I returned to my command, and came up again that night, and got here at 6 o'clock in the morning. I went to the President's, but did not see him.

THE PRESIDENT DECIDES TO REMOVE BURNSIDE.

I went again after breakfast, and the President told me that he had concluded to relieve me from the command of the army of the Potomac, and place General Hooker in command. I told him that I was willing to accept that as the best solution of the problem; and that neither he nor General Hooker would be a happier man than I would be if General Hooker could gain a victory there. The President also said that he intended to relieve General Sumner and General Franklin. I said that I thought it would be wise to do so, if he made the change he proposed to make. General Sumner was a much older officer than General Hooker, and ought not to be asked to serve under him.

BURNSIDE OFFERS HIS RESIGNATION.

I then said to him, "I suppose, Mr. President, you accept my resignation, and all I have to do is to go to my home." He replied, "General, I cannot accept your resignation; we need you, and I cannot accept your resignation." I replied that I had some private business to attend to; that it was absolutely necessary it should be attended to, it had been neglected so long. He said, "You can have as much time as you please for your private business, but we cannot accept your resignation." I replied, "You can say whether I shall stay in the service or not; but if I stay in, I wish to be employed." And I took the liberty of saying to the President that if all general officers whom it was found necessary to relieve should resign, it would be better for him, as it would free him from the applications of their friends. He said that was true. "But," said he, "there is no reason for you to resign."

HOW DEPARTMENTS ARE ASSIGNED IN WASHINGTON.

Mr. Stanton and General Halleck had come in in the mean time. The President said I could have the department of North Carolina. I said that it was now under command of an officer who had served there under me for a long time; that he was an efficient man, and now knew more about that department than I did; and I did not think it would be just to him to give the department to me. They then spoke of combining the two departments of North Carolina and South Carolina, and giving them to me. I said that they had just sent General Hunter there; that he had scarcely got there; that he ranked me, and I did not think it would be wise to supersede him by me. That seemed to strike them at once; and I do not think they seriously intended to say what they did say with reference to General Hunter. They then said that General Foster had applied to have me come down there; that he would rather serve under me than to have command of the department. That coincided with a letter that I had myself received from General Foster, and which I had thought was of rather a complimentary nature. I said that that was all very well; but it might create trouble for me to go there, and General Foster certainly was able to command the department.

BURNSIDE WANTS THE TRUTH TOLD.

They then said, "General, make your application for a leave of absence, and we will give it to you." I said, "Very well, I will make application for thirty days of absence." I went to the department and found an order there relieving me from the command of the army of the Potomac, at my own request. I said to General Halleck that that was not a just order; that I did not want to appear before the country as a man who voluntarily gave up his command without some reason; that I certainly wanted to have the reputation of remaining as long as it was found advisable for me to remain. I had not made myself the judge of that matter, as the committee will see from what I have stated. I then said to General Halleck, "You must take my resignation." He said, "The Secretary of War has made this order, and I cannot change it." I replied, "You can go to the Secretary of War and say to him that this order does not express the facts of the case." I then went to the Secretary of War, and told him that I had preferred to resign, under the circumstances, and the issuing of this order confirmed me in that preference. He talked to me about the injury to the cause, and the injury to myself. I replied, "I don't care a snap about myself, for I feel that I am right; but I do not want to injure the cause."

HIS GENEROUS DEVOTION.

We had quite a talk upon the subject. Both he and Gen-

eral Halleck talked very kindly to me. I finally told them, "Issue just what order you please: I will go off on my thirty days' leave of absence, and then come back, and go wherever you say—even to command my old corps (the 9th corps) under General Hooker, if you desire." And I would do it. These matters are all matter of record, and therefore there is no desire on my part to have them made public. My plans in reference to my last movement were distinct and accurate, and it would do harm to publish them, and my object is to do good.

KNOWLEDGE OF BURNSIDE'S PLANS.

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. Did the President know, at the time he sent you the telegraphic dispatch suspending your movement, what movement you contemplated?

A. No, sir; nothing, except that I had ordered a movement. I take it he knew that. General Halleck knew it. None of them knew my plans. In fact, General Halleck telegraphed me distinctly and positively to send nothing at all over the wires in regard to my plans.

By the chairman:

Q. Did those who communicated with the President know your plans?

A. No, sir; not a general in my command knew my plans. They knew they were to cross. That was all.

THE INTERMEDDLING OFFICERS.

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. Who were the officers who reported to the President in relation to your movement, prior to his sending you that dispatch?

A. General John Cochrane and General John Newton, to the best of my belief. I knew this order, No. 8, would bring the truth out, if I was mistaken, if there was a possibility of my being mistaken; because, if I was mistaken about them, the President would protect them.

Q. Do you know whether they made that report to the President on their own motion; or were they instigated to it by some one else?

A. I know nothing at all of their being instigated to it. I know that General Franklin told me he knew who went to the President before I knew myself.

Q. Did he know the purpose for which they went?

A. I said to him that those two officers should be dismissed the service; that no general in command could succeed with such officers about him. He said "You are mistaken, I think, about their motives." I said: "They went to the President of the United States, and talked about my movements, and that is enough."

Q. Did he know that they went to the President to talk about your movements?

A. I never could find that out.

Q. Did I understand you correctly that this telegraphic dispatch was sent you by the President, based on statements, as you suppose, of General Cochrane and General Newton, and that neither they nor the President knew your plans?

A. They did not know them, so far as I know. They had no right to know them.

Q. Had Secretary Stanton or General Halleck any knowledge of the order suspending your movement, before the interview between you and the President, when they were present?

A. Not of the telegraphic dispatch.

By the Chairman:

Q. Do you know whether the President counseled with the Secretary of War or General Halleck about suspending your movement?

A. They both told me, at that interview, that that was the first they had heard of it.

By Mr. Gooch:

THE BETRAYAL OF BURNSIDE'S PLANS.

Q. Do you know how the details of your cavalry movement became known to the enemy?

A. No, sir.

Q. To whom had they been communicated, so far as you know?

A. I gave them distinctly to the President and to Gen. Halleck—possibly Mr. Stanton may have been present. Those were the only persons who knew them from me, except some of my staff officers, who were in camp, and who necessarily knew them. None of the general officers of my command knew them.

Q. Do you know how the enemy discovered your second contemplated movement?

A. Yes, sir. They discovered it by seeing the movement of the troops, and from the delay caused by the bad weather after that movement commenced. With good weather we were 48 hours ahead of them.

I determined to make a general order, in order to get rid of persons I saw were of no service to me, and making some strong examples to the army. I had determined some two weeks before to issue an order of the nature of this General Order No. 8, but I was fearful of its creating

trouble just at a time when it was very necessary for us to be in harmony.

Q. Have you now any knowledge or reason to believe that your orders relating to the Fredericksburg battle were disobeyed by any of the officers under your command, or not executed with that good faith and alacrity which should characterize an officer on the field of battle?

A. I do not think there was any willful disobedience of orders, or any willful act of bad faith; but there was, in my opinion, a lack of alacrity and strict adherence to the spirit of the plan, which seriously affected the result.

FRANKLIN'S FAILURE.

General Franklin was ordered to attack at a particular point on the lines of the enemy, with at least one division; that to be well supported, with his line of retreat well open. His column of attack was with but one division, and that, I think, the smallest in his command. That division, according to the statement of General Meade, succeeded in breaking the first line of the enemy, but he reports that he was not promptly supported. The spirit of the order indicated that the column of attack should be with two or three small divisions, or one large one, as the order said that it should be with at least one division, well supported. There is a difference of opinion as to how it should be well supported. My opinion has been that it should be with a division on each flank, and a division in the rear, to follow the charging column.

HOOKE'S DISAGREEMENT WITH BURNSIDE.

General Hooker was ordered by me to carry his force across the river and aid General Sumner in the attack. After he got over, he sent word by one of his aides-de-camp that he did not think the heights opposite the town could be carried. I sent him word back that he must make the attack. He then got on his horse and rode over himself, and represented to me personally that in his opinion the heights could not be carried. I told him to go back and make the attack. I look upon this as a loss of time, and a preparation on the part of an officer for a failure, inasmuch as I felt it to be his duty to attack when ordered.

These are the only two cases to which I attach any importance.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN DONE.

Q. Viewed in the light of all the facts that you now have any knowledge of, what would have been, in your opinion, the effect, had General Franklin made the attack with the force and vigor with which you deem he should have made it?

A. I think the height at Hamilton's house would have been carried. We then would have held the road by which the communications of the enemy were kept up, and would have had free access to the open ground in rear of the line of heights, which would have caused the enemy on the heights, immediately opposite the town, to be very much shaken, even if it did not cause them to evacuate the place. It would have made the work opposite the city much easier. These things are distinctly laid down in my written order. I stated in my written order to them what would be the effect.

Q. Did General Franklin have on hand at the time a sufficient force with which to make the attack with the number of men contemplated by your order, and at the same time have the attacking force properly supported?

A. I will answer that question in this manner: I ordered two of General Hooker's largest divisions to go to General Franklin's bridges and remain there as supports to his command, with the view of having those divisions hold the bridges, together with the artillery that was in position above them. Independent of those two divisions, which, I think, amounted to nearly 18,000 men, General Franklin had over 40,000 men of his own grand division. One of my aids, whom I sent to General Franklin's position, returned to me at about one o'clock, and told me that the attacking column, to him, seemed to be very weak; that there was a large portion of the forces remaining in position opposite the bridges. Those forces turned out to be the whole of Smith's corps, and a portion, if not the whole, of Sickles' division. I then sent word by this aid to Gen. Franklin to make a vigorous attack at once with his whole force, and he sent me word that he would attack with every man that he could spare after protecting the bridges. I soon after went down to General Sumner's headquarters with the view of ascertaining how they were progressing. I received reports there that the columns of attack were failing, and I sent over some orders of the same nature that I sent to General Franklin.

Q. Do you know whether General Franklin obeyed your second order?

A. I know that no considerable portion of Smith's corps was under musketry fire, or formed any portion of the column of attack. That corps amounted to something over 20,000 men.

Q. And do you mean that it should have taken part in the attack?

A. I would simply say that if I had been there I would have put them in. At Roanoke, Newbern, and Antietam I put into the fight every man I had.

FRANKLIN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAILURE.

Q. What, in your opinion, would have been the result of the battle of Fredericksburg had the attack under General Franklin been made with the proper vigor, and had it been made with the force which should have been used for that purpose, considering the number of men at his disposal?

A. I am of the opinion that had General Franklin used all his disposable force, the result of the action of that day would have been favorable to us. In answer to a former question I have said that I did not consider the two acts of General Hooker and General Franklin, to which I referred, as willful disobedience of orders, or willful acts of bad faith. I am almost certain that neither one of them had as much confidence in the success of the move as they ought to have had to have been entirely efficient, and it is possible that a lack of confidence in me affected them to some extent. I would like to add here that I think a mistake was made in sending General Hooker to report to me at Warrenton, after it was well known by the authorities that General Hooker came very near receiving, instead of me, the command of the army of the Potomac.

Q. You think it was a mistake when the question of who should command that army had been between you and General Hooker, and had been decided in your favor?

A. Yes, sir; that it was a mistake to place him junior in command to me.

Q. Did your second proposed movement have any advantages over your first proposed movement, after the battle of Fredericksburg?

A. No, sir; it was not so good. But I could not make the other, for the enemy knew all about it. Their pickets used to talk about the matter across the river.

[Addition made April 3, 1863.]

I sent Captain Lydig to General Franklin at 10½ o'clock to ascertain the condition of his forces. Captain Lydig says in his statement:

"I found General Franklin in a grove of trees in the centre of his command; and, on delivering my message, I was informed by him that Meade was very hotly engaged, and that his men were by that time pretty generally engaged. He also added, I think, that Birney had orders to support them. I then inquired if any of General Smith's corps were engaged, and was told they were not. I returned to headquarters—passing Captain Cutts, who arrived as I left General Franklin—and reported the information I received to General Burnside, who seemed at the time annoyed at the smallness of the force engaged, and expressed his surprise that none of General Smith's troops had been put into the fight. It was about 12½ o'clock when I arrived with my report at headquarters.

"P. M. LYDIG,
"Captain and Aide-de-Camp."

I next sent Captain Cutts with an order to General Franklin to advance his right and front. Captain Cutts states in his note-book that he carried the order to General Franklin, and the General said to him that it was impossible to advance; upon which he returned to me to show why General Franklin thought it was impossible to advance. When he communicated the reply to me, he says that my reply was, "But he (General Franklin) must advance." I then sent Captain Goddard to General Franklin with an order, which the following statement will explain:

"HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE OHIO,
"Cincinnati, Ohio, April 3, 1863.

"I was sent on the day of the battle of Fredericksburg to General Franklin on the left, with this order from General Burnside: 'Tell General Franklin, with my compliments, that I wish him to make a vigorous attack with his whole force—our right is hard pressed.' This order was given me about half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, and I delivered it to General Franklin, in the presence of General Hardie, before half-past two o'clock.

"R. H. I. GODDARD,
"Captain and Aide-de-Camp."

MAJ.-GEN. HOOKER'S TESTIMONY.

[The following is the whole of the evidence of Gen. Hooker before the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War.]

WHY THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN FAILED.

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1863.

Maj.-Gen. Joseph Hooker sworn and examined.

By the Chairman: Question. To what do you attribute the failure of the peninsula campaign?

Answer. I do not hesitate to say that it is to be attributed to the want of generalship on the part of our commander.

Q. Were you consulted upon the subject of the line of the peninsula in preference to the one direct to Richmond?

A. I never was consulted on the subject.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN DONE AT YORKTOWN.

Q. What was the condition of things at Yorktown when our troops first landed on the peninsula, as regards the strength of the place and the relative strength of the opposing forces?

A. I did not go down for some three weeks after Gen. McClellan went down. He went with the army from Alexandria, and the return vessels stopped at Budd's Ferry, where I was, and took my division down. Gen. McClellan took down about 90,000 men, and when I joined him I took 11,000 down to him. I did not see the returns, but that was the understanding there. Franklin afterward joined with his division. At the time that Gen. McClellan landed with this large army there were somewhere between 8,000 and 15,000 at Yorktown. I have heard it estimated as low as 8,000 and as high as 15,000.

WHAT HOOKER WOULD HAVE DONE.

Q. What course would you have advised at the time of the landing on the peninsula under the circumstances?

A. What I subsequently did will, I think, convey an answer to that question. I attacked, with my single division, a line of works at Williamsburg stronger than the line across the peninsula at Yorktown. At Yorktown, long after I joined, I never could understand why I was required to send one half of my number on duty, day and night, to dig, so as to invest that place. I could only conclude that a siege had been determined upon somewhere in the programme before ever having felt to see whether we had an enemy in front or not. And a great many others felt so too. From my examination of the works at Yorktown, and reaching away beyond the position that I occupied, I felt that their lines could be pierced without any considerable loss by the corps with which I was on duty—Heintzelman's corps. We could have gone right through, and gone to the rear of the enemy. They would run the moment we got to their rear, and we could have picked up the prisoners. Right there at Yorktown the enemy had expended a great deal of labor. But I would have marched right through the redoubts, which were a part of the cordon they had, and got on the road between Yorktown and Richmond, and thus compelled the enemy to fight me on my ground, and not have fought them on theirs.

WHAT M'CLELLAN MIGHT HAVE DONE.

Q. Suppose that Gen. McClellan had thrown his army between Yorktown and Williamsburg with as

much rapidity as he could, what would have probably been the effect?

A. *It would have resulted in the capture and destruction of the enemy's army.*

Q. *Do you know any reason why that could not have been done?*

A. *I do not.*

Q. You were there when the enemy retreated from Yorktown?

A. I was within a mile and a half of there.

Q. Will you state, briefly and succinctly, what took place upon their retreat?

THE RETREAT FROM YORKTOWN.

A. The troops ordered out in the first instance to pursue them were some dragoons and some light batteries under Gen. Stoneman. I received orders to support Gen. Stoneman, and left my camp between 1 and 2 o'clock in the afternoon for that purpose. I do not know at what time Gen. Stoneman left. I followed in his rear. After I had proceeded out about five miles I met Gov. Sprague, who informed me that Gen. Stoneman had fallen upon the rear of the enemy. I rode up to where Gen. Stoneman was, and found that he was held in check on the Yorktown road, about a mile and a half this (Yorktown) side of the cordon of redoubts running across the peninsula near Williamsburg. I rode forward to ascertain how I could put in my infantry. Gen. Stoneman told me that the enemy was about a mile in his front, where they held some redoubts. It turned out afterward to be Fort Magruder. We were then where the enemy could throw shells over our heads from the fort.

A MARCH IN THE MUD.

After examining the ground, I heard that Smith's division had filed into the Yorktown road in advance of mine. I immediately returned and joined my division, and found that it had been halted, in order to enable Smith's division to pass. We were detained there in that way between three and four hours. As soon as I ascertained this to be the case, I requested Gen. Heintzelman to allow me to take a different road to go up to the place occupied by the enemy. Gen. Smith's division then occupied almost the entire road between the point where they had filed into the Yorktown road, and where Gen. Stoneman was, and there was no chance for me to get my division through by that road. I learned from a contraband that by going two or three miles further I could get up to the same position the enemy held, coming in on his right flank. To this the general assented. *I started upon this route just about dark, and marched that night until 11 o'clock.* By that time the roads had become so muddy—it was raining very hard—the mud was knee deep, and my men had become so fatigued that I halted right in the road, intending to renew the march at the dawn of day in the morning. We were then about two miles and a half from Fort Magruder.

THE BATTLE OF WILLIAMSBURG.

We resumed our march at daybreak, and about 6½ o'clock came up to the advanced outpost of the enemy, which was perhaps a half a mile from Fort Magruder. I could see from the position where I was three or four redoubts on this line of the enemy's works. I could also see the line of telegraph poles on the Yorktown road which led to where Gen. Stoneman was. I ordered two regiments to advance as skirmishers on the work which commanded the Yorktown road—to skirmish up to the work. And I dispatched two regiments with instructions to break down any barrier and destroy any force that might be between me and the position that Gen. Stoneman occupied. As soon as my skirmishers had driven the enemy into Fort Magruder, I ordered two batteries forward and opened on the work at once. The two regiments that had been sent to the Yorktown road passed down the road, found no enemy on it, found no barrier, and reported to Gen. Hancock, who was about a mile and a quarter from Fort Magruder, that there was nothing to prevent the troops there advancing. Those regiments then returned. As

early as 9 o'clock in the day my skirmishers had advanced so near Fort Magruder, and there held their position, that they could not work their artillery. If a man showed his hand or head above the work he got a ball in it. When this was done, I sent word to the commanding officer on the Yorktown road that there was nothing to prevent his advancing his troops and taking position alongside of mine. The place to where I sent was about a mile and a half from me. I supposed then that Gen. Heintzelman was there; but it turned out that he had left, and Gen. Sumner was in command with a large force, certainly not less than 30,000 men. *He could have advanced through the line of defenses across the peninsula, at Williamsburg, without losing ten men. The enemy could not fire, for I had him in a vice.* I wanted him to advance, and until 3 o'clock of that day I expected he would advance and march through the line held by the enemy, and go to picking up prisoners. During this time my own troops were engaged with not less than three or four times my number. Gen. Kearney, who was the last of all the army to leave Yorktown—except Porter's division, which was left to garrison Yorktown—was the first to come to my assistance. *If Gen. Sumner had advanced the Rebellion would have been buried there. He did no advance at all.*

WHERE MC'CLELLAN WAS.

Q. Where was Gen. McClellan during all this time?

A. *At Yorktown.* About 9 o'clock, or thereabouts, of the morning of the fight, Prince de Joinville, seeing that no re-enforcements would be sent to me, started for Yorktown and reached there in about an hour. It is reported to me, and I have no doubt that it is so, that he said to Gen. McClellan, "General, you have three old women in the advance. Gen. Hooker is engaged heavily, and they will send him no re-enforcements. It is necessary for you to go to the advance." I think Gov. Sprague went down also to urge Gen. McClellan to come up. It was reported to me that Gen. McClellan left Yorktown between 4 and 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Lieut.-Col. Webb, now the Inspector of the Fifth Corps, was present at the interview between Prince de Joinville and Gen. McClellan. *Gen. McClellan showed a great indisposition to go forward, and only left, as I am told, between 4 and 5 o'clock.*

THE HARDEST FIGHT OF THE WAR.

Q. You stood your ground?

A. Yes, Sir. I had a very severe fight and lost 1,700 men. In consequence of the condition of the roads I could not get up my ammunition; and my men stood their ground with the bayonet and with such ammunition as they could collect from the cartridge-boxes of those who had fallen. I think that was the hardest fight that has been made this war.

Q. The enemy evacuated during the night?

A. Yes, Sir. When Gen. Kearny came up—he was my senior, but Gen. Heintzelman was under the impression at that time that I ranked Kearny, and he sent him up to report to me—when Gen. Kearny came up, as his brigades came up I put them in position. As soon as that was done, my own troops were withdrawn from the front and collected together as far as practicable, Gen. Kearny holding the advance. Gen. Kearny then said to me, "I think I rank you." I replied, "Certainly, General, you do." He then said he would assume the command, which was very proper. That night his lines of pickets held the advance. During the night the enemy evacuated Williamsburg.

THE PANIC IN RICHMOND.

I have since learned from most reliable resources that when the news of that battle reached Richmond, Jefferson Davis and Gov. Letcher moved their families out of Richmond, removed the archives and their libraries; and every citizen who could command a vehicle had his goods piled on wagons, and prepared to abandon the city. They only returned—those who had left—when they found

that the pursuit ceased. I might almost say was abandoned.

THE ROAD OPEN.

Q. Is it your judgment that you could have gone into Richmond then?

A. I think we could have moved right on, and got into Richmond by the second day after that battle without another gun being fired.

BUT NOT TRAVELED.

Q. What was done?

A. We moved on in a manner I never did understand, losing time. If there was any necessity for that, I have never yet appreciated it. So far as the best information we have goes, the enemy had abandoned the idea of defending Richmond. And it was only when they saw the lassitude and inefficiency of our army that they concluded to make a stand there.

THE BATTLE OF FAIR OAKS.

Q. Did you participate in the battle of Fair Oaks or Seven Pines?

A. At the time that battle was fought my entire division was stationed at what is called Oak Bottom Swamp, about five or six miles from where the battle of Saturday, the 31st of May, was fought. About 2 o'clock on that day I received orders to move one-half of my division to the front, the other half to remain and hold the position they then occupied. I started, and upon reaching to within about a mile of what was called Savage's Station, the head of my column became impeded by the fugitives, trains of wagons, and fragments of batteries upon the road, and was prevented from advancing except with their bayonets and at a charge. From this cause my column could make but little headway, and at the time I left them to ride to the front I doubted if they could advance at all. When I reached there the battle of Fair Oaks for that night was nearly over. About dark my troops came up. We bivouacked on the ground, the firing having been suspended. The next morning about 7 o'clock the firing was renewed. I started with the half of the division I had with me to meet the enemy. The enemy was firing upon Sumner's command, which was occupying the railroad at that time. I made toward the heaviest fire and came up in rear of the enemy, and in half an hour after my men became engaged. The enemy were utterly routed, throwing away their arms, clothing and haversacks, and broke for the woods in the direction of Richmond.

Q. That was the second day of the fight?

HOOKE'S RECONNOISSANCE.

A. Yes, Sir; and that was the end of the fighting at that battle. A part of my troops occupied the camp that had been occupied the day before by Gen. Keyes's corps, and the ground that he had lost that day. On Monday, the day after the battle, I received orders—the directions were very vague—to make a reconnoissance in force through the camp and beyond it. I did so without any resistance, except a little picket firing, and proceeded to perhaps within three and a half or four miles of Richmond on the Williamsburg road. I was then recalled, and directed to establish my command on the ground that Casey's Division had occupied on the first day of the fight at Fair Oaks.

Q. What portion of our army was engaged in that battle?

A. Keyes's corps, a little more than one-half of Heintzelman's Corps and a portion of Sumner's Corps. If any other troops were engaged I do not know it.

By Mr. Chandler:

Q. At what number would you estimate the actual force engaged on our side?

A. I should think that, all told, there might have been 25,000 men. The telegram directing me to return from my reconnoissance was, in substance, this: "Gen. Hooker will return from his brilliant reconnoissance; we cannot afford to lose his division." All I have to say is, that I had no expectation of being lost.

RICHMOND MIGHT HAVE BEEN TAKEN.

By the Chairman:

Q. Suppose that the next day after this repulse of the enemy at Fair Oaks Gen. McClellan had brought his whole army across the Chickahominy and made a vigorous movement upon Richmond, in your judgment, as a military man, what would have been the effect of that movement?

A. In answer to that I would say, that at no time during the whole of that campaign did I feel that we could not go to Richmond. And I will say, further, that after Gen. McClellan received his orders to abandon Harrison's Landing, I went to him voluntarily and suggested that with the force we had there we could take Richmond, and pressed him to do it. So confident was I that we would be successful that I was willing to take the advance, and so assured him. This interview took place about 12 o'clock on Sunday. From that interview I returned to my camp, stopping on the way about two hours. On reaching my camp I found on my table an order from Gen. McClellan to prepare myself with three days' rations and the usual amount of ammunition, and to be ready to march at 2 o'clock on Monday. This order was communicated to the whole army, and I firmly believe that order meant Richmond. I had said to Gen. McClellan that if we were unsuccessful it would probably cost him his head, but that he might as well die for an old sheep as for a lamb. I told him that I knew of no better place to put an army than between Jackson—who was at that time in Pope's front—and the defenses of Richmond; that the troops holding those defenses would have to march to the succor of Jackson, and would be compelled to come out and give battle outside of their defenses, where I knew we were always stronger than the enemy. But before the time arrived for executing that order it was countermanded, and hence the results of Pope's campaign. At Harrison's Landing I felt that we were in no place to come back by water up the Potomac River, but if we were wanted at Fredericksburg we should march there. But we afterward came up by water.

THE VICTORY OF MALVERN.

Q. Were you at the battle of Malvern?

A. Yes, Sir; and at that place we won a great battle.

By Mr. Chandler:

Q. Could you have gone into Richmond after that fight?

A. I have no doubt we could. The day before I had a fight at Glendale, and under the orders I had to leave my wounded behind me, and I left two surgeons to take care of them. The enemy in coming to Malvern had to march right by my hospital. My surgeons afterward reported to me that about 3 o'clock on the day of the battle of Malvern the enemy commenced falling back, and kept it up all that night; that they were totally demoralized, many of the men going off into the woods, and trying to conceal themselves from their officers; and that they were two days collecting their forces together.

By the Chairman.

Q. Where was the General-in-Chief during the battle of Malvern?

A. I understood that he was on board the gunboats.

Q. Did you see anything of him on the ground that day?

A. I saw him once.

Q. After the firing commenced?

A. I think I saw him about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. I am not certain that I saw him, but I was told that he was in a party on the field. I know that I had occasion to communicate with him, but I could get no replies. I wanted Kearney's division put in a little different place from where it was.

Q. Had the defeat of the enemy at Malvern been

followed up by our whole force what would have been the probable result?

A. *Richmond would have been ours beyond a doubt.*

Q. Instead of that you fell back to Harrison's Landing?

HOW M'CLELLAN RETREATED.

A. Yes, Sir. We were ordered to retreat, and it was like the retreat of a whipped army. We retreated like a parcel of sheep; everybody on the road at the same time; and a few shots from the Rebels would have panic-stricken the whole command.

M'CLELLAN'S DESERTION OF POPE.

Q. Do you know any reason why the Army of the Potomac did not more promptly support Pope?

A. I do not know of any reason; I have only conjecture. I always felt that he was not supported promptly.

Q. As a military man, knowing the condition of the Army of the Potomac after they landed at Aquia and Alexandria, would it have been possible for them to have formed a junction sooner than they did, so as to have co-operated advantageously with Gen. Pope?

A. I know of no reason why it was not done. I myself felt as though Pope was not supported. But it was a matter of feeling. I had no opportunity of knowing the facts in the case.

THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN.

Q. You participated in the Maryland campaign?

A. Yes, Sir.

Q. Will you give us a brief account of that campaign, and what the reason was that we were not more successful?

A. I was placed in command of the first corps d'armée—McDowell's old corps—as it passed through Washington to go on to the Upper Potomac. On the 13th of September I came up to the vicinity of the enemy. As I did so, at a little place called Middletown, I was directed by Gen. McClellan to go forward where Gen. Burnside was said to be engaged with the enemy at South Mountain and look at the ground there. This was on the Cumberland road—the old national road. The object was to force a passage over that road, then in the possession of the enemy.

BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN.

I went forward and found Gen. Burnside engaged on the south side of the road with his batteries, and with Reno's corps forming to attack the enemy on the mountain. Cox's corps had already been engaged, and I judged, from the numbers that I passed in going to the advance, that they were retiring from the attack. From the point at which the batteries were planted I had a good opportunity to see the formation of the mountain and the position of the enemy.

While in that position I received orders from Gen. McClellan to advance with my corps on the north side of the road, for the purpose of making a feint in favor of Burnside's troops. At that time I belonged to the right wing, of which Gen. Burnside had been placed in command. Feeling that an attack on the south side of the road would not result favorably to us, after putting my column in motion I directed my troops to advance to the base of the mountain on the north side of the road, and as rapidly as the divisions arrived I had them deployed for battle. As soon as they were deployed I directed an advance, which resulted in our gaining possession of the spiral ridge of the mountain that night, where I directed my troops to remain until further orders. It was dark when we gained those heights. In the morning the skirmishers took possession of the road, which enabled our army to advance.

THE PURSUIT.

As soon as this was communicated to Gen. McClellan I was instructed to follow up the retreating army, and, if my troops required rest, to let Richard-

son's division, which had been sent to report to me, take the advance, while my men were making coffee and getting something to eat. They followed up the pursuit vigorously, taking prisoners all the way, and about 10 o'clock that day they came up to the position which the enemy had taken to make a stand. This was about midway between Antietam Creek and Sharpsburg, on the road leading to the ford of the Potomac. The enemy were formed in two lines, each of which I judged to be about six miles long. They were formed perpendicular to the Sharpsburg road, directly across the road; about three miles of line on one side of the road and about three miles on the other. I judged that they had in those two lines about 50,000 men. It seemed to me at the time that they were drawn up and displayed for effect. I was already informed that they had fallen back from South Mountain hastily and in disorder. At that time only Richardson's division, some of Pleasanton's cavalry, and one brigade of my corps, Gibbon's, had arrived within about a mile and a half of the enemy. The creek was between me and the enemy.

About 2 o'clock I saw that the rear of the enemy's line was breaking into column and marching to the rear, in the direction of Williamsport, where there was another ford across the Potomac. I fully expected that they were on the retreat. I immediately sent an officer of the Engineer Corps—Major Houston—to ascertain if there were any fords across Antietam Creek by which I could cross, when the Rebel forces should be so much reduced that it would be safe for me to attack. I was prevented from crossing Antietam bridge by reason of the batteries which the rebels had planted to defend it. Probably not less than 60 guns could have swept the bridge had I attempted to cross there. By 5 o'clock that day, I think, the balance of my corps had arrived, and the other corps were coming up. About that time General McClellan arrived. That was before the force in front of me had been sufficiently reduced to justify an attack by me. When he arrived, of course, I was not at liberty to make the attack.

HOOKE'S ADVANCE AT ANTIETAM.

We remained in these positions until about 2 o'clock on the 16th, when I received orders to cross Antietam creek, near Cadysville—that is, some three or four miles above the road leading to Sharpsburg. I immediately put my corps in motion, and, after proceeding about two miles, I fell upon the outposts of the enemy and drove them in; I drove them ahead of me until dark that night. When night came I had as much resistance in front of me as I could well stand up under.

HE TAKES THE RESPONSIBILITY.

As soon as I had established my lines, with a view to make my camp secure during the night, I informed General McClellan that I should attack the rebel army at the earliest dawn. I desired to take the initiative. I was aware that the enemy was already in great strength in front of me, and that in all probability they would be re-enforced during the night. When I had left with my corps to make this attack, I had been assured that, simultaneous with my attack, there should be an attack upon the Rebel army in the center and on the left the next morning. I sent word to Gen. McClellan when I proposed to attack, in order that he might direct the other attacks to be made at the same time.

BATTLE OF ANTIETAM.

At dawn I made the attack, and gained the high ground which commanded the position which the enemy had taken, and which they held at the time I commenced the movement. At 9 o'clock that morning I had advanced steadily, but securely, to the point that I desired. I had at that time a battery of howitzers on this high ground. I had sent for two additional batteries to double-quick up to that position. A number of my infantry regiments were well posted to protect them on their arrival. While advancing, on the morning of the 17th, and about 7½ o'clock, Mansfield's corps, at my request,

had been sent to my support, and as soon as all my reserves were engaged, I ordered him forward, and about one-half of his command assisted in taking possession of this commanding position. While looking for a point at which to post the batteries I had sent for, I was wounded. At that time my troops were in the finest spirits. They had whipped Jackson, and compelled the enemy to fly, throwing away their arms, their banners, and saving themselves as they best could. Some of the commanding officers of the regiments were riding up and down in front of their men with the colors captured from the enemy in their hands; the troops almost rent the skies with their cheers; there was the greatest good feeling that I have ever witnessed on the field of battle.

It was at that time that I sent word to Gen. Sumner that I had been wounded, and that he had better bring his corps forward. I was conscious of his arrival, and of the condition of his advance. He addressed me and passed on. I had previously fainted, but was in a state of partial consciousness at the time this happened. I was then carried off the field; and that is about all I know of that battle. We drove the enemy nearly a mile that morning. The enemy I encountered on the 16th had been re-enforced during the night by Jackson, from Harper's Ferry. All that party my troops had filled with panic, and they were falling back, fleeing upon their comrades in a disordered condition. I knew that I had gained enough there, so that when Sumner came up—from a conversation I had had with General McClellan the day before, I supposed I would take command—I felt as though there would be troops enough with me to drive the rebel army into the Potomac, or to destroy it; and I expected to be able to do that by 3 o'clock that day. I had started early in order to be able to do it.

Question. You regarded that battle as won, only requiring to be followed up to make the victory a decisive one?

Answer. As an evidence of my feeling when I left the field, I telegraphed to my brother-in-law—supposing they would be anxious about me—that we had won a great battle. *I did not suppose that anything could happen by which any drawn battle could be made out of it.* I telegraphed that we had won a great battle, which had been severely contested on both sides. I had lost almost 5,000 men myself; but I supposed that we had everything in our own hands. Instead of a simultaneous attack being made on the center where Porter was, and on the left, where Burnside was, there was no attack where Porter was; and they told me afterward that Burnside attacked somewhere between one and three o'clock of that day. There was, therefore, plenty of time to transfer the troops I had had in my front to meet Burnside when he attacked; so that really, in the first instance, I was attacking the whole rebel army with only my own force.

Burnside's Campaign.

DECEMBER 20, 1862.

Major-General Joseph Hooker sworn and examined.

By the Chairman—Q. What position do you hold in the military service?

A. I am a Major General of Volunteers, and command one of what is called the Grand Divisions of the Army of the Potomac.

Q. You have read the resolution of the Senate under which this Committee is now acting. Will you please go on and state, in your own manner, what you consider necessary in order to give us a clear and concise history of the movements of the Army of the Potomac since Gen. Burnside assumed the command of it?

THE CHANGE OF LINES.

A. I joined the army at Warrenton about the 10th of November. At that time Gen. Burnside was in command. After I had been there a day or two, during which time there was some talk of transferring the line of operations from the line of the railroad at Warrenton to the line of railroad at Aquia

Creek, Gen. Halleck and Gen. Meigs visited Gen. Burnside; as I was informed, to determine whether this transfer of the line of operations should be made. As near as I can recollect, that was about the 11th of November. That matter was discussed between those Generals and Gen. Burnside, and it was determined that that transfer should be made. Some one of the party remarked, either Gen. Halleck or Gen. Meigs, I do not recollect which, that they they thought they could have everything ready on this line in three days. This was not a private consultation. I was present in the room at the time these things were discussed, and although my opinion in regard to them was not asked I heard the conversation. They said they thought they could have the pontoons ready, the stores landed, and everything in readiness to advance in three days. I remember that I thought that was marvellous at the time; that it was not within the range of human possibility to do that. Soon after the movement to the Rappahannock commenced.

THE MARCH TO FREDERICKSBURG.

I will say here that I brought up the rear of the army in marching from Warrenton to this point. I mention this matter because I think it has an important bearing upon some matters which are to come afterward. The rear of this movement was considered the post of honor.

After being upon the road for about three days, I stopped one day, with my command, at Hartwood. From that point I addressed a letter to Gen. Burnside, requesting that he would permit me to cross the river with my grand division at one of the fords there, and come down on the south side of the Rappahannock. But, for reasons assigned in a communication from him, the request was denied me. I then marched to this place.

In the mean time I had received orders to have my command furnished with twelve days' rations, forage for three days, and the requisite amount of ammunition. At Hartwood I had three days' provisions with me. On reaching this point I found that the division which had preceded me, I presume in obedience to orders, had provided themselves with the prescribed preparations, rations, forage, &c., for a forward movement, and nothing was left for my division. For three days after reaching here I was on less than half rations. After a few days, however, provisions began to accumulate here, and after a week or ten days I was enabled to prepare for the advance, so far as related to food. When I reached here, which was on the 23d November, all the pontoons had not arrived, and I was told that the reason for the limited amount of supplies was the difficulties of landing and forwarding; there were not cars enough; there were no facilities at Acquia Creek or at Belle Plain for landing them.

HOW TO CROSS THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

After the pontoons arrived, it became a matter of importance to determine where and in what way we should cross the Rappahannock. The officers commanding the Grand Divisions were called together to discuss and determine that matter. One of the first questions that were submitted to us was where we should cross the river. Gen. Burnside proposed that a portion should cross about twelve miles below here. I objected, by my vote in the council, to crossing two columns so far apart, and stated my preference that the whole army should cross at what is called the United States or Richards's Ford, about twelve miles above here. But I was overruled, and it was determined that the crossing should be here and about twelve miles below here, and the road was corduroyed in the vicinity of the crossing about twelve miles below here, in order to facilitate the crossing.

About this time Gen. Burnside intimated that I should take the advance in crossing. I said to him that I should be most happy to do it; but if my division should hold the advance when it was the post of danger, and cover the retreat when that was the post of danger, I would like to have that place assigned me in line of battle; and if he would give me the right of this army I would vindicate my claim to it.

It was then that Gen. Burnside changed the plan of crossing, and he also changed the place of crossing. He had three bridges thrown across at Fredericksburg, and two bridges about three or four miles below here; and it was determined that Franklin should cross on the lower bridges, and Sumner should cross in advance of me on the upper bridges. My position, if they succeeded, was to be to hold my division in hand to spring upon the enemy in their retreat.

DIFFERENT PLANS.

About this time a council of war was held to determine in what manner we should attack the enemy after crossing the river. It was determined, as I supposed—for I left the council with that impression—that we should attack them without any separation or division of the army, attacking the enemy on their right, below here. That was what I advocated, the keeping the army together, and turning the enemy's right. I did not approve the attempt to pierce so strong a line at two points, when one would be as much as we would be likely to succeed in. A prisoner, a German, had been taken and brought into this very room (Gen. Sumner's headquarters.) This prisoner said he had no objection to communicating everything that he knew in regard to the Rebel forces, provided the Rebel authorities were not informed of it. He had been impressed into their service, and wanted to quit it. His appearance and his story were such as to carry conviction to the minds of every one who heard him. He told us precisely of the arrangements for defense they had made on the right, but in regard to the left he knew less. He said that it was impossible for us to carry this position. He informed us of the batteries they had, the positions they had taken, and the defenses they had thrown up, and said that the Rebels regarded it as an impossibility for them to be driven from it. But Gen. Burnside said that his favorite place of attack was on the telegraph road. Said he, "That has always been my favorite place of attack." The army was accordingly divided to make two attacks.

DISPOSITION OF HOOKER'S TROOPS.

The night before the attack, two of my divisions—and they were my favorite divisions, for one was the division which I had educated myself, and the other was the one that Kearney had commanded, and of those two divisions I knew more than of any others in my command—these two divisions were sent down to support Franklin. They left here under orders to hold the bridge head. At 10 o'clock on the day of the battle I was standing here on this roof with Gen. Burnside, when word was brought that those two divisions had been ordered forward with Franklin. I said to Gen. Burnside that when it came to my turn to act I would have nothing to act with, and that *I did not want Gen. Franklin to fight my divisions*; that the next report we heard would be that those divisions were under fire. He assured me that they should not cross the bridge down there; that they were ordered as supports to Franklin, to assist in defending the bridges, and were not to go into battle with him.

Soon after I received an order to send another of my divisions to relieve Gen. Howard's division, in the upper end of Fredericksburg. My other three divisions were drawn up at the heads of the bridges on this side, ready to cross at a moment's notice. About 2 o'clock on that day I received orders to send another of my divisions to support Gen. Sturgis, and about the same time I received an order from Gen. Burnside to cross over my other two divisions and attack the enemy on the telegraph road—the same position we had been butting against all day long. As soon as I received the order, my divisions commenced crossing.

HOOKER CROSSES AT FREDERICKSBURG.

I rode forward to see what I could learn from the officers who had been engaged in the attack—Gen. French, Gen. Wilcox, Gen. Couch, and Gen. Hancock. Their opinion, with one exception, was that the attack should not be made on that point. After

conferring with them, I went to examine the position, to ascertain whether or not it could be turned. Discovering no weak point, and seeing that many of the troops that had been already engaged in the attack were considerably demoralized, and fearing that should the enemy make an advance, even of but a small column, nothing but disaster would follow, I sent my aid-de-camp to Gen. Burnside to say that I advised him not to attack at that place. He returned, saying that the attack must be made. I had the matter so much at heart that I put spurs to my horse and rode over here myself, and tried to dissuade Gen. Burnside from making the attack. He insisted on its being made.

HOOKER IN THE BATTLE.

I then returned and brought up every available battery in the city, with a view to break away their barriers by the use of artillery. I proceeded against the barriers as I would against a fortification, and endeavored to breach a hole sufficiently large for a "forlorn hope" to enter. Before that the attack along the line, it seemed to me, had been too general—not sufficiently concentrated. I had two batteries posted on the left of the road, within 400 yards of the position upon which the attack was to be made, and I had other parts of batteries posted on the right of the road at the distance of 500 or 600 yards. I had all these batteries playing with great vigor until sunset upon that point, but with no apparent effect upon the Rebels or upon their works.

HUMPHREY'S ASSAULT.

During the last part of the cannonading I had given directions to Gen. Humphrey's division to form, under the shelter which a small hill afforded, in column for assault. When the fire of the artillery ceased I gave directions for the enemy's works to be assaulted. Gen. Humphrey's men took off their knapsacks, overcoats, and haversacks. They were directed to make the assault with empty muskets, for there was no time there to load and fire. When the word was given the men moved forward with great impetuosity. They ran and hurrahed, and I was encouraged by the great good feeling that pervaded them. The head of Gen. Humphrey's column advanced to within, perhaps, fifteen or twenty yards of the stone wall, which was the advanced position which the rebels held, and then they were thrown back as quickly as they had advanced. *Probably the whole of the advance and the retiring did not occupy fifteen minutes. They left behind, as was reported to me, 1,760 of their number, out of about 4,000.*

I may as well state here that Sykes's division was drawn up to support Humphrey's, so that, in case Humphrey should succeed, I could throw forward all the force that I had left—Sykes's division, about 4,000 men—to hold the position in face of 30,000 men who were massed behind that wall. That was why I did not like to make the attack, because, even if successful, I could not hold the position; and I assigned that as the reason I did not think it advisable to make the attack.

THE NIGHT AFTER THE BATTLE.

It was now just dark. Finding that I had lost as many men as my orders required me to lose, I suspended the attack, and directed that the men should hold, for the advance line between Fredericksburg and the enemy, a ditch that runs along about midway between the enemy's lines and the city, and which would afford a shelter for the men.

I will say that, in addition to the musketry fire that my men were exposed to, the crests of the hills surrounding Fredericksburg form almost a semicircle, and these were filled with artillery, and the focus was the column that moved up to this assault. That focus was within good canister range, though I do not think any canister was thrown on my men that day. All these difficulties were apparent, and perfectly well known to me before I went into this assault. They were known also to other officers. Gen. French said to me that the whole army could not take that point, and I reported that to Gen. Burnside.

POSTING PICKETS.

After establishing my picket line, I returned and reported to Gen. Burnside what I had done. He was dissatisfied with the line I had taken for my pickets, and said that they must be established at the advanced position that we had held during the day. We had had some men lying down on their bellies, about 100 yards beyond this ditch, on the side hill which we could sweep with our artillery, and take possession of at any time. I immediately sent word for my pickets to advance to that place, and make that the line of the pickets, as Gen. Burnside had ordered. Gen. Burnside said that if we came back to the ditch I have spoken of, it would be a falling back of our army. I put Gen. Sykes's division on picket duty. That day, while the men were lying there on their bellies, my loss, in Gen. Sykes's command, was two hundred and four men, and my men were where they could inflict little or no injury on the enemy. Had my men occupied the ditch, there might have been a half dozen casualties during the day.

CONDITION OF THE ARMY.

That night, after seeing Gen. Burnside, I returned to Fredericksburg, and took command of the forces there. I placed Gen. Butterfield in the upper end of the town, so that he could defend it in case of an attack by the enemy. At the south end of the town I placed Gen. Couch. I requested of Gen. Burnside that all of the troops over there, but two divisions, might be withdrawn to this side of the river, because, if the enemy should throw a shell into the city, it could not fall amiss with all those troops there. Many of the troops were in such a condition that they gave me no additional strength. It has been reported through Rebel sources that great dissatisfaction is felt at our not having been shelled while our troops were in the city. And I have heard that courts-martial are now being held among the Confederates to examine into that matter; and that at one time they were actually heating shot in their furnaces to throw into the city while we were there.

We remained there until Monday night and Tuesday morning, when orders were issued, first, for Gen. Sumner's command to be withdrawn; and afterward, between three and four o'clock in the morning, for my own command to be withdrawn.

A COUNCIL OF WAR.

I ought to say here that the morning after we had made our attack, orders were issued for another attack to be made in the same place. But the officers who had already been engaged demurred to it, and the order was not carried into execution.

Q. Had you made any impression, in the mean time, upon their works?

A. *Not the slightest; no more than you could make upon the side of a mountain of rock.* On the day following the attack another council of war was held, and the question was submitted, how that place could be taken? When I think of it, the council was held on Monday, if I am not mistaken. It was composed of the generals commanding the grand divisions—all but Gen. Franklin, who said he could not leave town, as he was expecting an attack—and some of the corps commanders. The opinion of most of the council was, that the place could not be taken at all. My own opinion was that, if there was any chance to take the place it was by forming a heavy column of attack at night, when the enemy could not see to use their artillery.

By Mr. Chandler:

Q. What was there to prevent flanking them on our right, beyond their batteries?

A. Water—the lake and a mill-race, which was reported to me to be impassable.

By the Chairman:

Q. Was the strength of their position such as could be ascertained from this side of the river, before making the attack?

STRENGTH OF THE REBEL POSITION.

A. Yes, Sir. We had precise information of their position from the well-informed German prisoner I have before spoken of, who told us where their batteries were, of the ditches and the stone wall;

and the officers who made the attack in the forepart of the day told me the same thing before I made my attack; and the troops massed behind had been seen from the balloon. But if I was ordered to make the attack, I was perfectly willing to make it; for it made no difference what became of me. I made the attack, and such an attack as I believe has never before been made in this war.

Q. What is the length of that stone wall?

A. I should think it was some 500 or 600 yards; and rifle-pits were continued all along, amounting to almost the same thing. This wall appears to be not simply a plain stone wall, but a support wall. Behind the wall were rifle-pits, and there was earth between the rifle-pits and the wall. To batter down that wall was like battering the masonry or a fortification. I thought at first that I could knock the wall to pieces, and drive the Rebels from behind it. My batteries were served as gallantly as batteries could be served. They fired just as well as batteries could be fired. But their fire made no impression at all. I do not think one Rebel ran from behind the wall or from the rifle-pits. All I wanted to do was to make one hole through the wall, and I brought to bear all I could to do that.

OTHER PLANS.

Q. What prevented crossing the whole force at the upper fords, some 12 miles from here—crossing the river there and getting into the enemy's rear?

A. I do not know that anything prevented it, except that whenever a move of that sort should be attempted, the enemy would know of it as soon as we commenced it, and the fords there are of such a character that a few hours' work with so many men as they have would make those places very formidable. But I think that that would have been a much better move than either of the others were. I have not seen the works down below here. But it has always been my impression that Franklin, who was down there with — men, his own grand division, and — of mine, *could have swept everything before him.* He represented the position down there as very formidable. But I have no idea, although I have never seen it, but that — men could have carried everything down there. I do not know the fact, but I have understood that a large portion of Franklin's force was not engaged at all.

THE ESCAPE OF THE ARMY.

Q. After the fight, what prevented the enemy crowding you into the river, if they had made an attack?

A. All that I had there to prevent it was this one division of 4,000 men that had not been engaged, and another division of mine in the upper end of the town that had been sent there to relieve Gen. Howard's division. I had full confidence in those two divisions, because they had not been engaged.

Q. What was the number, all together, of our forces that were engaged?

A. I should think there must have been between — and — men under fire.

Q. What was the number of the whole army that we had across the river?

A. Franklin had nearly — men. I should think that we must have had altogether over the river well on to — men.

Q. What is your estimate of the Rebel forces over there?

A. I think they had about 80,000 men. The German prisoner said that they claimed to have 100,000 men. Once in that position they are a great deal stronger to resist than we are to attack. In an open field, in my opinion, they would not be a match for us if our army was in good condition.

GALLANTRY OF THE TROOPS.

Q. How did the men behave during the attack?

A. They behaved well. *There never was anything more glorious than the behavior of the men. No campaign in the world ever saw a more gallant advance than Humphrey's men made there.* But they ~~were put to~~ do a work that no men could do.

THE PONTOONS.

Q. What do you know about the delay in making the attack after the army arrived here?

A. There was a delay in the arrival of the pontoons, and there was also a delay in getting the provisions up here.

Q. Do you know at what time the pontoons were expected to be here?

A. As I have before stated, I heard Gen. Meigs, or Halleck, assure Gen. Burnside that they would be here in three days.

Q. Would that have been as soon as the army could have arrived here?

A. That would have been just as soon as the army could march here. They got ready fully as soon as I thought they could. When we had possession here before, the Government built a valuable wharf which would have answered every purpose to land stores for an army of 100,000 or 200,000 men. But when the army left here that wharf was burned, although the enemy had no vessels on the river, and the wharf could not have been used by them. I knew at Warranton that a transfer of the line of operations of this army could not be made in three days, or in three times three days. There were wharves to be built before the stores could be landed, for even if the stores were brought here they could not be landed until the wharf was built, except it was done by lighters. Then there were bridges to be built. I think it must have been ten days after I got here before the bridge over Potomac creek was built.

Q. Had this wharf been burned when the conversation between Gen. Halleck and Gen. Burnside took place?

A. It was burned long before that.

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. From the conversation to which you have referred, who did you understand was responsible for having the pontoons and the other necessary supplies for the army sent here?

A. I supposed that was the Quartermaster's business.

Q. As the matter was left at the time of the conversation, did you understand that the responsibility of having the pontoons and supplies here rested upon Gen. Burnside, or upon Gen. Halleck and Gen. Meigs?

A. I think it necessarily rested upon Gen. Halleck and Gen. Meigs, because it was beyond the control of Gen. Burnside, who was not where he could control it.

Q. Then, as I understand you, Gen. Burnside, from that interview, had a right to expect the pontoons and supplies here as soon as he could reach here himself?

A. That impression was left on my mind.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

By the Chairman:

Q. If they had been here, what would have been the result?

A. When Sumner's advance column reached here there were only some 500 of the Rebels in Fredericksburg. I do not know why they did not take possession of Fredericksburg. But the feeling seemed to be that they could take possession of Fredericksburg at any time; only a few days before, Lieut. Dahlgren of the cavalry, with 55 men, crossed the river and took possession of the town. When I was at Hartwood I heard that there was going to be a delay of three or four days in getting the pontoons here, and that was one reason why I asked permission of General Burnside to cross at the ford there, and come down on the other side of the river. When we got here we should have been in a condition to march right forward without stopping a day anywhere. *But the same mistake was made here that has been made all along through this war.* I think it would have been better to have held the line where we were, by retaining a sufficient force there to threaten the enemy and keep them up to their works at Culpeper and Gordonsville. But instead of that we withdrew every man, and even burned the bridges, thus

exposing our plan to the enemy the very moment we did so. If Gen. Sumner's corps had come down here and left me up there threatening the advance on that line, or had them to believe that we were going to advance on both lines, it would have been better. But the enemy saw at once what we were at, and came right down here, and they were nearer here than we were; and this country is such that wherever you give them two or three weeks to fortify, 100,000 men can make any place impregnable to any other 100,000 men.

HOOKER'S PLAN.

By Mr. Gooch:

Q. What was the strength of your command at Hartwood?

A. It was — men.

Q. Would there have been any difficulty as to supplies in your moving down the other side of the river, as you proposed?

A. I had three days' rations then; I was preparing to march down through Caroline County, where the people had just gathered their crops, and I could have got plenty of forage, and provisions enough for a week or a fortnight. At the time of the conversation between Gen. Halleck, Gen. Meigs, and Gen. Burnside, there was some talk of forwarding some supplies up the Rappahannock. I said that at Bowling Green I could draw my supplies from Port Royal as easily as I could get them when I was at Hartwood. I knew that I could take a position with 40,000 men that the whole Rebel army could not move me from.

Q. Would that movement have been a safe one in view of the fact that this army had not the means of crossing here?

A. Yes, Sir; because I could take the heights there with my command, and put them in a condition of defense. If I had gone there not a man of the enemy would have come to Fredericksburg, but they would have gone to some other river and fortified there, if we had given them time, as effectually as they have here. I regard the Rebel position on the Rappahannock as a strong one; I mean the one they retired to from Manassas. They had the advantage of two railroads—one to bring their supplies to them from the west, and the railroad from Richmond to bring their troops up from there. It is the strongest position they had in Virginia. The advantages of this position, to hold against a force seeking to cross the river and attack it, are such as I have never before seen.

Q. How far apart are the bridges at the two points where our army crossed here?

A. About four miles.

Q. You speak of the telegraph road; will you state more definitely what that road is?

A. The telegraph road leaves Fredericksburg from Hanover street, and runs through a depression in the hills in the direction of Bowling Green.

Q. How do you explain the fact that the enemy did not shell the city when our troops were crossed there?

A. I cannot explain it. It is inexplicable to me that they did not do so. As I have before stated, it is reported under flag of truce that they had at one time shot heating with which to fire the city, and that would have made a terrible time of it.

THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE TROOPS.

Q. Was our recrossing made unbeknown to the enemy?

A. I think it was here; how it was down below I cannot say. It was late when I got the order to withdraw my command—between three and four o'clock in the morning—and it was between eight and nine o'clock when the last troops were withdrawn. The enemy did not seem to realize but that there were troops in the houses. I withdrew my exterior line of pickets last of all, and they were not followed by the enemy.

Q. Had they discovered that our troops were to be recrossed, what could they have done?

A. I do not think we should have suffered much from their artillery fire on such a night as that was, as it would have been but random firing.

